

8TH TRANSPORTATION GROUP

SEP 967 — SEP 1968

***COLONEL JOE O. BELLINO
COMMANDING***

INDEX

VIATION
IN CENTE

PART 1

1

2

3

4

5

6

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

HISTORY OF
GROUP

NEWS RELEASES
AND STORIES

PICTORIAL
REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION
FOR PRESIDENTIAL
UNIT CITATION
(ARMY)

CONVOY SECURITY

P-125-02 18 Jul 02

17

17

INTRODUCTION

For the past 12 months the men of 8th Transportation Group (Motor Transport) on numerous occasions have had the opportunity to tell their story of how they conducted military line-haul operations over the longest line of communications in Vietnam. The methods and techniques developed out of experience and lessons learned, have provided entirely new concepts of security and operating logistical convoys in an active hostile environment.

This brochure has been prepared to respond to the many requests we have had to provide information and data on one facet or another of our operations.

8TH TRANSPORTATION GROUP (MOTOR TRANSPORT)

It is appropriate that the 8th Transportation Group (Motor Transport) will celebrate its Silver Anniversary in Vietnam. Born out of the necessity of another war on 9 December 1943, the 8th has traveled many miles enroute to its place today as the world's most unique truck transportation outfit. The diverse and potentially devastating challenges of a strange and violent guerilla war have provided opportunities for 8th innovations that have literally rewritten the text on combat convoy operations.

Originally constituted as the 8th Traffic Regulation Group, the unit trained at Fort Lawton, Washington prior to serving in the European Theater in World War II in the Northern France and Rhineland Campaigns. In June of 1946 the unit was inactivated at Reims, France, later to be reactivated at Frankfurt, Germany on 15 October 1949.

Allotted to the Regular Army on 27 March 1951, the monicker 8th Transportation Group was given to the unit on 3 January 1955. In June of 1966 the 8th received its final activation at Fort Lewis, Washington.

It was at Fort Lewis that the 8th trained for what would prove to be its finest hour - convoy operations over a troubled, guerilla infested road net along Vietnam's Coastal Plain and Central Highlands. On 24 September 1966 the men of the 8th boarded the USNS Leroy Eltinge at Oakland, California. Less than a month later - on 19 October 1966 - the 8th was in Vietnam.

Establishing headquarters in the coastal fishing and farming center of Qui Nhon, the 8th assumed operational control of three truck battalions - the 27th and 54th at Qui Nhon and the 124th at Pleiku. The mission, on the surface, sounded simple enough: provide motor transport support to tactical forces in the II Corps Tactical Zone. But the 8th was to find a set of obstacles confronting them totally unlike any encountered by any other group of truckers in the history of modern warfare.

The enemies were basically three fold. First, there were the roads. Highway 19 climbs over two rugged mountain passes as it winds toward the Central Highlands Province Capital of Pleiku. From Pleiku north to Kontum and Dak To 8th Group truckers negotiated Highway 14, and north from Qui Nhon to Bong Son and Duc Pho the route was pot holed, unpaved, narrow, crowded with treacherous traffic.

Next there was the heat, causing men's bodies to literally burn up unless proper precautions (plenty of water and salt; light, loose clothing) were taken, and the monsoon mud, which turned highways into barely navigable quagmires.

And finally, there were the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army (NVA) units. These fanatical Communist soldiers sowed mines, planted snipers, blew bridges and sprung violent ambushes in a concerted effort to interdict the vital supply line that was the 8th road net. But they failed. Neither the enemy,

'LESSONS LEARNED' KEEP TRUCKERS AHEAD OF VC

QUI NHON, RVN- "The men of the 8th Transportation Group are writing a page in Transportation Corps history," emphatically states U.S. Army Colonel Joe O. Bellino, commanding officer of the Qui Nhon Support Command organization.

"The 8th Group soldiers put their lives on the line every day on the Qui Nhon-Pleiku convoy run" continues the colonel.

"What makes this operation unique," adds Colonel Bellino, "is that convoys traveling through enemy infested areas provide their own protection".

The group commander gives much of the credit for the successful tactical engagements by his troops to an active program of "Lessons Learned." This program utilizes the soldiers' personal experiences in contact with the enemy. These transcriptions along with after-action photos of ambushes are the basic for instruction given to every man going on a convoy. This is one class that receives the soldiers' rapt attention.

Colonel Bellino is not content to sit behind a desk at the headquarters while his men on the road are taking the risks.

"Prompt reaction in an emergency can make the difference between life and death", comments the fiery troop leader. In a recent convoy ambush near Pleiku the colonel was traveling along as an observer-member. With the assistance of Sergeant Major Rudolph K. Proctor and driver Specialist 4 Leslie D. McPherson a reactionary force was formed, and assistance was rushed to his beleaguered truckers.

"General Creighton Abrams, deputy commanding general of the Military Assistance Command Vietnam recently described the 8th Transportation Group soldiers as frustrated tankers," concludes Colonel Bellino. "I think it's safe to say they are working off these frustrations."

nor the weather, nor the roads, nor the strange tropical environment has as much as slowed the 8th in its daily operations.

Why?

Many reasons: Courage, esprit, dedication, professionalism, pride, resourcefulness, innovation - to name a few.

The 8th's sturdy trucker/soldiers are out of their bunks at 3:30 A.M., getting home by night fall only if they are lucky. They go on, day in and day out, literally living with their trucks. Their effort and sacrifice is a reflection in their pride in being part of a unit that has refined sophisticated communications procedures; developed exotic armored "gun trucks" laden with elaborate weapons systems, set numerous tonnage records, received countless decorations...

And the 8th is continuing to march. World-wide attention to its accomplishments has served to prompt a larger vision as the officers and men of the 8th set their sights on even greater horizons.

That's the way it is and that's the way it has been with the 8th Transportation Group - for nearly 25 years. For these men, being "Better Than The Best", are truly "Without Parallel".

From October 1966 to date, members of the 8th Transportation Group have received the following awards:

- (1) Silver Star: 3
- (2) Legion of Merit: 22
- (3) Distinguished Flying Cross: 1
- Soldier's Medal: 1
- Bronze Star for Valor: 31
- Bronze Star for Service: 81
- Air Medal: 15
- Army Commendation Medal for Valor: 30
- Army Commendation Medal for Service: 123
- (10) Purple Heart: 141

8TH TRANSPORTATION GROUP (MOTOR TRANSPORT)
ARMED AND ARMORED AGAINST AMBUSH

Colonel Joe Bellino, Commanding Officer of the 8th Transportation Group, admits that he has fallen in love with the 8th Group because of their outstanding ability to successfully perform a logistical mission in the face of almost constant enemy harassment. In a recent letter he explained that in World War II and in Korea, highway transport units on occasion had operated over mined roads, received harassing fire, been attacked, and been ambushed. But he said, "Our Convoys (in Vietnam) get one form or another of it damn near every day."

The 8th Group operates as far north as Bong Son and as far west as Pleiku. On a mission-type basis the trucks of the 8th move from Pleiku and Qui Nhon to Dak To, and almost daily they wind their way to ROK units in Song Cau.

A variety of roadbeds bear the tire marks of the 8th's trucks, from Qui Nhon and Route 19 to An Khe. An Khe Pass is a series of hairpin turns extending 8 kilometers up a mountainous slope. West of An Khe is Mang Giang Pass--4 tortuous kilometers of climbing roadway.

The area through which the 8th operates is heavily infested with enemy snipers and mines, and ambush is an ever-present threat. Colonel Bellino analyzed the pattern of ambush and thoroughly indoctrinated his troops in procedures to minimize the effects of an unexpected attack on the moving convoy.

An ambush may occur at any time during the day, but late afternoon and evening hours are most dangerous. A cover of darkness affords the enemy his best opportunity to strike and to escape retaliation. The ambush is quick, well-planned, and difficult to counter. It occurs in a sparsely populated area in which there is heavy foliage. Generally, the site selected is in an area where the convoy passes over a rise into a bend in the road. The rise hides the action from following trucks. The ambush is of short duration; it is triggered by a command-detonated mine which will stop a vehicle, block the road, and permit heavy automatic weapons fire to bear upon the vehicles following as they push into the kill zone. Usually the enemy will withdraw within 10 minutes, since area reaction forces are quick to respond to calls for help.

When an ambush is encountered, actions are specific and immediate. Control vehicles notify security elements by radio, and reaction forces are swiftly dispatched. Vehicles in the convoy move forward as quickly as possible to escape the kill zone--fast movement reduces the chance of a kill. If the convoy comes to a halt, personnel dis-

mount and return maximum fire. The shoulders of the road may be mined, and personnel must move cautiously. Security vehicles bring a heavy volume of fire on the enemy. This action facilitates the rapid passage of task vehicles through the kill zone.

Hardened vehicles provide convoy security. A gun jeep--equipped with radio, M-79 grenade launcher, and an M-60 machinegun on a pedestal mount--is a prime security vehicle. However, the current ratio of $\frac{1}{2}$ -ton trucks to task vehicles makes it difficult to employ the gun jeep on the preferred basis of one for every ten task vehicles and leads to the recommendation that each truck company have seven $\frac{1}{2}$ -ton trucks authorized.

The 8th also employs the hardened $2\frac{1}{2}$ -ton truck (gun truck)-- the cab and cargo bed sides are covered with armorplate, and the floor of cab and cargo bed are sandbagged. The driver and crew are thus protected from weapons fire and mines. The gun truck is manned by a driver, assistant driver, and two gunners.

The 8th is modifying other motor transport equipment to give added protection against ambush tactics and for convoy security. The multiple caliber 50 machinegun (Quad 50's) on the $2\frac{1}{2}$ -ton truck body is an innovation. This weapon has proven successful when employed in tactical convoys. Formal weapons training to permit employment has been completed, and modification of the gun mount is now underway. A shortcoming in the use of this weapon is that the three-man crew and the $2\frac{1}{2}$ -ton truck must come from local resources. The 5-ton tractor also has been worked on to give it a degree of protection on the floor and cab sides. The major problem area in this vehicle is that the modification causes a heat increase inside the cab and reduces visibility through the side windows.

Convoy security is in direct proportion to the risk involved. Any after-dark operation outside of Qui Nhon, north of Bong Son, or beyond An Khe is extremely hazardous. Daylight operations from Qui Nhon to An Khe and Bong Son are somewhat less hazardous. The Hardened Convoy Concept is designed for operations in areas considered most hazardous. Convoys normally move in three to five march units of 10 task vehicles each. March units have a gun truck in the lead and a $\frac{1}{2}$ -ton gun jeep for control at the rear of the unit. When required, the $2\frac{1}{2}$ -ton truck on which are mounted the Quad 50's will be in the center of each march unit to give fire support to all vehicles.

Operational problems determine the time interval between march units. As equipment becomes available, an additional gun jeep will be employed at every interval between march units to prevent the enemy from using this time gap to his advantage. A reconnaissance vehicle will also be used in advance of the convoy in the most hazardous areas. Key vehicles

CONVOY PROCEDURES CHANGED

"If the present conflict in Vietnam is, indeed, revolutionizing doctrine on the brush fire or guerilla war, then the chapter on convoy operations is being written largely by the 1st Logistical Command's 8th Transportation Group," says the Group Commanding Officer, Colonel Joe O. Bellino.

With headquarters in the rolling Thanh Valley at Qui Nhon, the 8th Group area of operations sprawls west to An Khe, Pleiku and Dak To and north to Bong Son and Duc Pho.

Trucks of the 8th Group make departures daily to haul every thing from ammunition to asphalt, food to footlockers, down two of Vietnam's main arteries - Highways 19 to the west and 1 to the north.

Marshalling, maintenance, training, control - these are but a few of the many diverse problems faced by the men of the 8th Group.

But the one critical concern that is being met with the most creativity is the enemy.

Since December 1967, not a day has gone by that there has not been some kind of enemy attempt to disrupt or destroy an 8th Group convoy.

Sniper fire, mines, blown bridges and culverts and savage ambushes - the enemy doesn't miss a chance in his efforts to sever the Allies' vital supply lines, but so far he has been almost totally unsuccessful.

Why? Because of the raw courage and professionalism of the soldier-truckers and a unique system of convoying that revolves around an innovation called the Hardened Convoy Concept. "The idea, developed here at the 8th Group, is nothing more than a sophisticated system of convoy make-up, utilizing special armor, control and fire power-oriented vehicles which give the convoy commander a punishing, retaliatory capability," says Colonel Bellino.

This new development in convoy operations revolves around a small March Unit of cargo-carrying vehicles. Protection for the March Unit is provided by gun jeeps, a radio-equipped 3/4-ton truck with a machine gun, and a specially developed sand-bagged, armor plated 2½-ton gun truck equipped with two machine guns and a grenade launcher. Eventually, it is hoped that these gun trucks will be replaced by new commando armored cars.

Near the center of the March Unit is placed a 5-ton truck mounted with an awesome electrically operated Quad-50.

The four 50-caliber guns of the Quad-50 bring an understandable fear into the hearts of potential ambushers.

September 2, 1967, before the advent of the Hardened Convoy Concept, 8th Group convoy, ambushed just west of An Khe suffered eight killed and in action, 12 trucks totally destroyed and another

used in convoys are equipped with radios, and although communications are a problem, the 8th can communicate within its area of operations. U.S. Army aircraft are used for convoy cover and do monitor the group's radio frequency.

Colonel Bellino has already firmed up his thinking on some things that must be done to permit a truck group to perform at peak efficiency in a war such as the one in Vietnam. He recommends that each truck company have a minimum of seven $\frac{1}{2}$ -ton trucks authorized. Since hardened $2\frac{1}{2}$ -ton trucks are used in medium truck units for security purposes, five such trucks should be issued to each medium company. This vehicle, however, is an interim measure until the V-100 Commando Armored Car, a superior vehicle for convoy security, can be furnished.

The ambush instructions upon which the 8th Transportation Group (Motor Transport) driver relies are briefly stated:

Before Ambush--Be alert for changes in familiar scenes along route.

Expect ambush upon detonation of mines, automatic weapons fire, heavy sniper fire.

During Ambush--Radio security force--Contact! Contact! Contact!

Continue moving--maintain interval.

Follow in tracks of vehicle ahead to prevent further detonation of road mines.

If disabled, steer off road--permit passage of others--dismount--mount passing vehicle.

Avoid entering kill zone--provide flanking support fire into kill zone.

Remember that gun trucks provide maximum base of fire--fight as a team; deploy upon command.

Remember prime targets--enemy automatic weapons positions, enemy mortars, rocket positions, assaulting ground forces.

After Ambush--Protect and care for wounded personnel; evacuate them ASAP.

Reopen roadways--assure roadways are mine free.

Contact EOD to remove mines.

Provide flank security.

When contact is broken, do not give chase

Stay alert for counterattack.

Remember details.

Colonel Bellino's statement that "What we are doing here is unique in Transportation Corps history" is reinforced by the remarks of General Westmoreland about "the outstanding job done by the transportation truckers who kept supplies coming so that the combat troops (at Dak To) could keep pressure on the enemy," and by the remarks of the ex-tanker commander, General Abrams, Deputy to General Westmoreland, who said "The 8th Group truckers who were ambushed near Pleiku on 24 November 1967 were a bunch of frustrated tankers."--No higher compliment could be paid another soldier by an ex-tanker commander than that.

Commanded by Col. Joe Bellino, the 8th does not have an envied job—they get socked by VC and North Viet ambushes at least once a week. And since they're supposed to be "support" troops or non-combatants, requisitioning enough goodies like Nancy, to foil the Reds, is not easy.

In fact, one of the most treasured compliments the truckers received was when Gen. Creighton Abrams, Commander of MACV, accidentally witnessed an ambush from the air and remarked "Those guys look just like a bunch of frustrated tankers."

'A SPECIAL BREED OF MAN'

By SP4 PETER D. SHAPIRO

QUI NHON, RVN - Pleiku is a long haul from Qui Nhon. The line haul trucker who makes this 200-mile round-trip is a special breed of man. He is a hybrid character of energy, guts, skill and determination. When he has completed the Pleiku turn-around, the road dust will be caked against his body with the sweat of the day's ordeal. This is what he lives for - the road is the challenge.

Specialist 5 Jeffrey A. Jertson is a veteran convoy trucker for Qui Nhon Support Command's 597th Transportation Company.

His day begins with a hurried breakfast of eggs, cereal, juice and a 'breakfast briefing' outlining the day's convoy. Staff Sergeant Sampson Brewer gives the briefing. "You'll carry full loads, make sure they're secure and make certain you wear your steel pot and flak jacket at all times. Pick up your trailer loads at De Long Pier. Have a good trip." Jertson knows the briefing by rote; he also understands its necessity.

PICKING UP THE AMMO

After dispatching his 5-ton tractor from the 597th's motor pool, Jertson fights the early morning traffic jam and picks up a 3,180-pound load of ammunition. The last checkpoint before take-off is at the Trailer Transfer Point where the trucks are assigned their positions in the convoy, and the drivers get the final security briefing from the convoy commander.

Specialist Jertson listens attentively as First Lieutenant Clyde F. Winter closes the briefing with ". . . and in case of ambush, all trucks are to run the kill zone, stay mobile and keep the road clear." The convoy leaves.

Forty-five tractor-trailers begin the slow climb up Highway 19 west toward the steep grades of An Khe Pass. They haul lumber, asphalt and other supplies, but the primary cargo is ammunition. Jertson is careful to maintain a hundred-meter interval between his truck and the 5-ton he is following. This precaution will allow ample elbow room for maneuvers in an ambush situation.

Jertson spots one of the four convoy gun trucks winding around a bend two trucks to his front--the vital security is on hand. Escorting the convoy are four gun trucks and four gun jeeps, one of each strategically spaced for every ten vehicles.

Gun trucks are specially designed, armor-plated, machine-gun-equipped one and-a-half ton cargo trucks.

When mounted with a machine-gun, radio and grenade launcher, the army's traditional quarter-ton truck is transformed into a potent 'gun jeep'.

THE SIGHTS, THE NOISES

The road to An Khe is a paved blacktop and relatively smooth riding. The fields on either side of the highway have been cleared to discourage ambushes. The sights, the noises, the smell of a convoy-everything is unique.

unique. By now they're all part of Jertson. He is constantly aware of the danger and the drudgery.

Fifty miles in two hours. The beautiful but treacherous climb up An Khe Pass looms just ahead. Jertson throws his 5-ton into low gear and begins the ascent.

Averaging eight miles per hour, he jockeys his truck around the wicked hair pin and heads toward the final crest.

A BRIEF REST

The convoy leaves twelve trucks behind at An Khe; the remaining thirty-three regroup outside the city. It is a brief rest; time enough to buy a coke (50 piasters) from one of the Vietnamese soda girls.

Like the other truckers, Jertson waits for his favorite tyke. With four gulping swallows, he's on the road again heading into "Ambush Alley," the Mang Giang Pass and to Pleiku.

The stretch between check points 23 and 28, an unpaved gravel trail between An Khe and the towering Mang Giang Pass, is the most demanding. It's a hell road of VC mines, frequent ambush and choking dust squalls.

It twists through twenty desolate miles of arid plain guarded by tanks emplaced on occasional ridges. Jertson is tense with anticipation and calls upon all his experience as a professional soldier. He adjusts his steel pot, tightens his flak jacket and braces himself for the inevitable jolts of the gauntlet.

He recalls last week's ambush and the sniper fire of a score of previous convoys. This is the real test - all the cards are on the table.

'ALL JELLY NOW'

This time there was no trouble, if one could call an hour and a half of plowing through the gravel, the dust and the ditches 'no trouble'. The convoy has taken the top of Mang Giang, and Jertson is tired but feeling good. "It's all jelly now" - his way of saying it will be an easy haul the rest of the trip.

The trail-blazing is over, and the highway is smooth again. The convoy will reach the Pleiku Trailer Transfer Point in ninety minutes at an average speed of twenty miles per hour. Even this last leg of the journey is hazardous.

The tension has been released, the going is monotonous; the men are anxious to reach Pleiku and must fight the inclination to relax. Jertson thinks about his sister graduating from the University of Minnesota this June, about the Montagnard kids waving the convoy on along the highway, and about the coke and hamburgers at Pleiku Trailer Transfer Point. It's been a gruelling five hours but he's almost there.

DROPPING OFF THE LOAD

The layover at the transfer point is a short one. Sufficient time is allotted for dropping off the loaded trailer, hitching up with another trailer for the return, refueling and having a quick lunch. A hasty

turn-around makes good sense and Jertson knows it. The sooner they're on the road again, the sooner they'll be back at Qui Nhon.

Topographically and psychologically, the return run to Qui Nhon is all downhill. The men anticipate the warm showers back at the 597th, the light banter about the day's activities. They must still cope with the long road but, with luck and a good passage through "Ambush Alley," they're sure to be back by dusk.

Almost home free, Jertson turns into the 597th and begins the nightly ritual of driver maintenance on his 5-ton. The cab must be cleaned, the 5th wheel (which couples the trailer to the cab) must be greased, water for the radiator and fuel for the tanks - all necessary preparations for tomorrow's convoy.

When Jertson finally sits down to relax with the other truckers, the talk revolves around the run and the road. They award the prize for the day's number one 'Shammer' (goof-off) and complain in general.

"But you know, it's funny," says Specialist Jertson, "it isn't half-bad duty. We do the job. Sure, we get tired of pulling tough maintenance on the trucks but we're got the best trans outfit I know. The whole thing the dirt, the road, the work - it's in our blood."

8TH TRANSPORTATION GROUP

EXPERIENCE OF A 2D TRANSPORTATION COMPANY PLATOON LEADER.

Because line haul convoy operations are essentially confined to the hours of light, the 8th Group conducts shuttle operations all night long in the port and depot complex area of Qui Nhon spotting empty trucks and trailers to be loaded, and then moving the loaded vehicles to the truck terminal to be ready for convoy operations at 0600 hours.

Shortly after 0100 hours on a recent morning 1st Lieutenant Paul J. Stegmayer, a Platoon Leader in the 2d Transportation Company was returning five 8th Transportation Group trucks to the truck terminal in Charang Valley about 15 miles outside Qui Nhon City.

As Stegmayer, in the lead of the column, approached a bridge about half way to the terminal he spotted what looked like a large fire. Then a round of some type exploded next to his jeep, and the Lieutenant decided to try to run his small convoy on through the ambush kill zone and across the bridge.

His jeep and the truck just behind him made it, though his jeep received 12 rounds of small arms fire, three coming through the windshield alone. The truck following became disabled, and the other three trucks stopped short of the kill zone to bring fire on the attackers.

Finding his trucks still pinned down under heavy automatic weapons fire, Stegmayer used his radio to call in support. Soon, artillery fire was pouring in on the enemy position. Soon after the artillery began to take effect, the trucks were able to move or be moved out.

It was later learned that the bridge was held by a VC force that had captured it a few minutes before and were preparing to blow the bridge when Lieutenant Stegmayer came along with his shuttle convoy and aborted their attempt.

The bridge is a key river crossing on the main highway leading north out of Qui Nhon logistical complex, and it is critical to keeping the supply line open to the forces along the northern coast and in the highlands of Pleiku.

Colonel Joe O. Bellino commanding the 8th Transportation Group (Motor Transport) commented, "There is no doubt that Lieutenancy Stegmayer's quick thinking and cool actions under considerable pressure literally saved the situation from becoming a disaster. If he hadn't provided the help and the leadership he did, when he did, the entire column could have been easily destroyed along with the bridge and a critical artery in the supply line severed."

It is the third time Lieutenant Stegmayer has been in an ambush since joining the 8th Transportation Group.

A CHAPTER IN AMBUSH ALLEY

There was exactly one good thing about having the point: you didn't have to chew everyone else's dust.

When you moved over to the bad things about leading a truck convoy of ammunition, napalm and gas and oil, you stopped thinking about it and just kept your eyes on the road.

That's where Jerry Christopher's eyes were when he spotted the paper bags, sprouting up out of the road like fat brown mushrooms. There were ten of them, ammonium nitrate fertilizer mines strung on a single fuse line, a "daisy chain" mine. It would blow the axles off the first truck to hit it, blocking the narrow road and forcing the 75-truck convoy to grind to a standstill in the ambush kill zone. And Christopher's was that first truck.

At 20 miles per hour, Christopher shouted to his driver, Bob Logston: "We're in the kill zone!" "What?" said Logston through the engine roar. "We're in an ambush!" Logston floored his deuce-and-a-half gun truck, reached for his rifle.

Someone back in the bed yelled "let's give 'em hell," and the two M-60 machine guns drowned out all other sound. But Christopher is the one who caught hell.

A B-40 rocket plowed into the front end, blowing off the left tire and part of the wheel, slewing the truck around to a grinding halt 25 yards from the mine.

Christopher yelled "Contact" three times on the radio in the cab, clutched his grenade launcher and tumbled out, followed by Logston. Bullets were already smashing the windshield, ripping the cab's armor plate, plowing through the motor block.

The next rig, a five-ton packed with small arms ammo, downshifted, pulled out of line and roared on through, trying to clear the kill zone. He never saw the daisy chain that blew off his front end. He swerved out of control, off the right side of the road. The third trucker was pouring the coal to his rig when he hit the remaining mines. He lost his front wheels, slid like a hurtling demon 75 yards down the road and ended up in a ditch across the road, his load on fire. He was carrying 155 mm high explosive shells.

SP4 Dick Dominquez revved his engine and raced for the gap. He was carrying three tons of CS gas, a noxious chemical that causes vomiting and uncontrollable sickness. He made it through, charging on down the road towards Pleiku to get help for the convoy. He was the only one to get out.

The next rig, also packing 155 projectiles, took a B-40 and slewed to a halt road-center, 50 yards from Christopher's rig. He was on fire. The road was completely blocked.

Ambush Alley

Christopher, behind his own truck, was firing grenade across the road, trying to get the B-40 man. He couldn't find him. The artillery rounds on the nearest rig started cooking off-blast after blast rocked the corpse of the deuce and a half, showering everyone and everything with shrapnel. Christopher crawled up front looking for his driver.

Logston was lying on the road, the lower half of his body a bloody mess of machine gun bullets. He was trying to crawl out of the line of fire. "Bob! Y'all right, Bob?" said Christopher uselessly as he pulled Logston off into the grass. "What're we gonna do now, Jerry?" moaned Logston. Helicopters, unaware of the carnage below them, wheeled high in the sun and flew off into space. "Why don't they do something? Why don't they help us?" pleaded Logston in feeble anger. There was no help.

Christopher got him under the truck, bandaged him as best he could, muttering "Hang on - we'll make it OK." He wished he was sure of that.

A rocket hit the tailgate above him. SP4 Czerwinsky, a machine gunner, took critical frag hits all over his body.

Pvt Jim Boyd got it in the arm. Both M-60s were smashed, useless. As Christopher tried to save Czerwinsky's life, Boyd found a rifle with his good arm, started banging away.

Christopher could see North Vietnamese sappers in the grass across the road, so close he didn't think the rounds in his M-79 would have enough space to detonate. They did.

Behind Christopher was a 700-yard long river of death and flame. Gas tankers ripped open in huge mushrooms of flame, frying their drivers in the metal ovens of their cabs. Shells, from bullets to rockets, were cooking off all up and down the convoy. NVA sappers were climbing atop trucks, planting charges and firing down into the confused crowd of truckers hiding in the grass across the road.

Christopher saw Reds being picked off the trucks with M-16's like ducks in a shooting gallery. The road was littered with burning, blasted corpses, flaming, twisted piles of steel and wreckage that had once been trucks, and dying men.

Roy Handers, a 22-year-old trucker from Spartanburg, S.C. was a volunteer machine gunner on another truck, 17th in the doomed convoy. The first sign of trouble was a B-40 that hit inches behind the truck. Handers and his buddy, Bob Sas, opened up with machine guns. Another rocket hit the cab, wounding the driver and throwing him to the floorboards. The huge truck lumbered out of control off the side of the road, straight into the enemy guns.

With sickening feeling in his gut, Handers felt the rig start to flip in the ditch, flinging him helpless to the wall like the roller coasters he used to ride as a kid. She rolled, stopped upside down in the grass. Handers found himself pinned by his leg to the ground. Sas was up

Ambush Alley

forward, crushed to death under the cab. With his hands, Handers clawed his leg free. It wasn't broken.

In the roaring, swirling battle Handers, light-headed with shock and cut all over, wandered up forward. He heard a cry for help. The driver was pinned in the cab. An NVA machine gun on the other side of the truck, kept him from trying to free the wounded man.

He started crawling around looking for a gun, anything he could use as a weapon. There was a "plop" beside him, and Handers rolled without looking to see what it was. It was a grenade. The fragment tore open both his legs, threw him ten feet.

Reeling like a drunk, unable to see anything except a spinning blur, he staggered to his feet, tried to get back to his buddy in the cab. A merciful blackness washed over him then. Roy Handers was out of the war.

He woke in a hospital, hours later.

The tanks, APCs and helicopters and bombers finally got to them, pouring a huge vengeance into the ambush forces along the road and driving them off. Not without cost. Three truckers were dead, 22 wounded. Thirteen trucks were totally destroyed, nine damaged.

Christopher, after the last of the wounded were flown out, stood up and looked around him at the carnage. At least, he thought, they named the highway right. They called it "Ambush Alley".

TOUGH GAL CLEARS WAY FOR CONVOYS

By BOB CUTTS
S&S Correspondent

QUI NHON, Vietnam - Nancy is no lady. With yellow snarling teeth and a heart of plate armor, she makes life hell for the men who "court" her every week in Ambush Alley.

Nancy's a truck - standard Army deuce-and-a-half, but with some extra "optionals" you can't get in a showroom. Like five machine guns, armor plating, grenade launchers and radios.

Nancy and another truck just like her, both mounted with "quad .50" turrets (armored pods mounting four .50 cal. machine guns under a single gunner) are insurance policies for the trucks of the 8th Transportation Group - insurance against the kind of hijackers that would send any teamster running for cover fast, but which are SOP for 8th Group truckers who run the daily convoys from Vietnam's central coast northward, or up into the highlands.

Recently, the 40-truck convoy was headed for Pleiku, making the long, long run up Highway 19 - "Ambush Alley" - with a load of highly explosive artillery rounds.

Nancy was last in line, with her fire team of machine-gun-mounted jeep and armored light weapons truck. Unexpectedly, the mortars hit - first they bracketed the road, then scored a direct hit on the tractor-trailer just ahead - all eight rear tires but the load was untouched and the GI piloting her kept going on the rims.

That was Nancy's cue.

Sgt. Jimmy Wood, team skipper, ordered Nancy's driver, Spec. 5 Dennis Morningstar, to pull out around the convoy and head into the "kill zone" to cover the trucks.

Spec. 4 Rudy Salinas, in the quad turret, opened up, while Spec. 4 Jerry Swick, dancing in the open, fed her bullets. It was tight—they could see blasts of smoke from the North Vietnamese gun muzzles, not 25 yards away in the grass. Salinas' answering blast was a stunning roar of sound. But then two of his .50's jammed.

Wood opened up with his cabmounted M-60 machine gun, trying to stem the tide of bullets. But it jammed too. Just as he leaned down for his rifle, a bullet smashed through the fire wall, spewing upward to clip him through both legs. He was put out of action.

It was all in a day's work for the 8th Trans. The 8th, biggest truck outfit in this half of the world, runs 120-truck convoys to both Pleiku, in the highlands, and Bong Son, north of Group's Qui Nhon headquarters, every day. With the deuces and 5-ton tractor-trailers, the 8th moves needed supplies—about 4,000 tons of them a day—to the 4th Inf. Div., the 173rd Airborne Brigade, An Khe base camp, the Korean Tiger Div. and three engineering groups; everything from beer to bombs.

CONVOYS GUARDED BY BOUNTY HUNTER

QUI NHON, RVN- To quell the threat of ambushed convoys along highways One and 19, the U.S. Army Support Command, Qui Nhon's 8th Transportation Group has unleashed the "Bounty Hunter".

Armed with an M-55 quad .50 caliber machine gun, the 5-ton cargo truck "Bounty Hunter" hunts Viet Cong with 2,000 rounds per minute fire power

Manned by five 444th Transportation Company personnel the heavily armored "Bounty Hunter" has protected Operation Frostbite convoys and resupply operations to Dak To and Duc Pho.

"We trained for two weeks with the 41st Artillery Battery near Qui Nhon. After completion of the familiarization course, my gunner, cannoneers, and assault driver were able to hit moving targets at 1,000 meters," U.S. Army Sergeant Sammy T. Burgess relates. Sergeant Burgess is the "Bounty Hunter's" team leader.

To date, the "Bounty Hunter" and its Viet Cong stalking crew have not seen any trace of the enemy on their convoy escort missions.

"Perhaps the awesome firepower of the 'Bounty Hunter' has given the Viet Cong second thoughts about attacking 8th Transportation Group convoys-to often embattled Pleiku, An Khe, and Duc Pho," observed U.S. Army First Lieutenant Paul A. Turay. Lieutenant Turay is a convoy commander for the 444th Transportation Company and platoon leader for the "Bounty Hunter".

In addition to protecting convoys, the powerfully armed guntruck guards the 8th Group Transportation perimeter.

FIX-ALL TRUCK SHOP

QUI NHON, RVN- "My job encompasses all the headaches of a traffic cop, a 24-hour mechanic, and a motel manager," sighed First Lieutenant Roger F. Volland.

Lieutenant Volland is officer-in-charge of the 1st Logistical Command's 520th Transportation Group. The 520th operates the An Khe Sub-Area Command Trailer Transfer Point for convoys between Qui Nhon and Pleiku.

Ambushes and minings add to the normally hectic day of the 520th.

"At least once a day there is a crisis here . . . a truck is disabled in the infamous Mang Yang Pass . . . a jeep is mined . . . the inevitable little mechanical difficulties. So far we have been able to overcome everything thrown our way by fate and Charlie," observed Lieutenant Volland.

One hundred-eighty trailers can be parked and serviced in the 520th's compound area. Maintenance operations are constantly performed on the spot to insure safety along Highways 1 and 19.

The 520th secures loose loads, changes flats and stocks commonly replaced small parts for all convoy vehicles. At least 12 tires are changed daily on 5-ton tractors and trailers. Over 600 load stabilizations are performed on 8th Transportation Group trailers monthly.

"All of my men have been required to put in 20-hour days on many occasions. At times the pressure gets so great we have to exist on Combat Rations. The mess hall is just a block away, but a block too far when Charlie lurks in the pass," concluded Lieutenant Volland.

CRISIS / CHALLENGE / CONCEPT / CONQUEST

(The Story of 8th Transportation Group
Operations in the Republic of Vietnam)

By

COLONEL JOE O. BELLINO

Commanding Officer, 8th Trans Gp (MT)

In the dark drizzle of the dawn, Qui Nhon begins to wake. Lambrettas, like so many scurrying beetles, appear on narrow, pot-holed roads. Cone-hatted "mamasans" shuffle wearily through the morning mist, battered cans of water dangling precariously from each end of carrying poles not unlike those used by their ancestors from centuries past. Merchants wield straw brooms to sweep debris from the dirt stoops of their shops.

Farmers, working in tandem, pull effortlessly at the ropes from a straw basket as they take water from one rice paddy to irrigate another. It is 0600 hours, but the Sun still has not made its appearance, as if trying to steal just a precious bit more rest before beginning its journey across the troubled country side of Vietnam.

But at a large military marshalling area nestled against a mountain ridge on the western outskirts of the city, men are being briefed, machines tuned, cargoes checked in a rash of feverish but orderly activity that is common every morning of the year.

Convoys of the U. S. Army's unique 8th Transportation Group (Motor Transport) are readying to move out - to places like An Khe, Dak To, Pleiku, Bong Son, Duc Pho and other exotic sounding locales.

To the men who call these remote dots on a battle-scarred map home, the 8th Group is literally their life line.

In the last moments before the march units are formed up to go out on the road, all of the security vehicles pass by the firing range adjacent to the marshalling area. Here machine guns rattle in last minute checks to insure that the men and their weapons are ready to do their job.

Food to sustain them, ammunition to arm them, beer and soda pop to cheer them - these are but a few of the cargoes carried forward daily over guerilla-infested roadways in support of the Army's mammoth effort in Vietnam.

The Transportation Corps is a relatively young service. It was not at Bull Run with the Quartermaster, nor at San Juan Hill with the Cavalry, or with the Infantry at Verdun. Although not quite thirty years old, the TC is carving out a sizeable chunk of heritage in Vietnam in one of the proudest moments of its young life.

Indeed, what the 8th Group alone is doing today in the jungles and mountains of Vietnam already is serving to drastically reshape TC doctrine, from unit organization to convoy makeup, from tactics to equipment utilization and development.

Each one of the 600 - plus convoy personnel responsible for the 425-450 vehicles in convoy that day leaves with the knowledge that the enemy will try to keep him from delivering his cargo. Since early September of 1967, hardly a day has passed that some 8th Group convoy has not been plagued with either sniper fire, blown bridges, mined roadways or ambushes. And to experience all four in one day has not been the exception. In order to keep the supply pipeline full and give the tactical forces their needed supplies, each man must deliver his share of approximately 3000 tons per day and drive his share of over 1,000,000 miles per month in spite of the many dangers.

To understand why this situation exists, and what the men of the 8th Group are doing to cope with it makes fascinating reading. It is a story of the creation of bold new methods, techniques and doctrines that already are being incorporated into lesson plans at the Army's Transportation School at Fort Eustis, Virginia, and the Combat Development Command at Fort Belvoir, Virginia.

Much has been said about the enemy in Vietnam. Experience has shown that the Viet Cong, and his slightly more professional counterpart, the soldier of the North Vietnamese Army, are masters of guerilla warfare. Their cunning is a legacy of the Viet-Minh forces that fought the French fifteen years ago, and many of them can measure their own experience by that same number of years.

They hit and run. The enemy makes expert use of cover and concealment. Their patience yields surprise, and they possess the fire power to derive the maximum shock value from their frenzied attacks. They are indistinguishable from their peasant brothers who may be sympathetic to the Allied cause. And they know the land and the war-for many have been fighting it all their mature lives.

Their ambushes are extremely short in duration and characterized by devastating firepower from automatic weapons, rockets and massed small arms. They are demolition experts, and can fashion a lethal mine from a dud bomb or mortar round. And the bamboc casing they like to use cannot be detected by metal-sensing mine sweeping equipment.

Amid the hostilities, 8th Group convoys must remain road-bound. Only two main highways are used - QL #1, running north and south, stretches from Saigon all the way up the coast to Da Nang, and QL #19 begins in Qui Nhon and sprawls westward, over two mountain passes, up over the Central highlands Plateau, through Pleiku and on into Cambodia.

These roads have little shoulder. They are flanked either by rugged mountains, elephant grass or marshy rice paddies. The American is an alien, and he and his equipment are easily identified.

Because of enemy night time activities, the roads are available to 8th Group vehicles during restricted hours. (QL #19 opens westward from Qui Nhon at 0600, closes eastward from Pleiku at 1515 and An Khe at 1700. QL #1 opens north bound from Qui Nhon at 0715 and closes south bound from Bong Son at 1600.) An additional consideration is that convoys carry, among other things, large quantities of ammunition and petroleum products, including the highly flammable MoGas and AvGas.

This appears to be a situation where a skillful, dedicated enemy sets prey on a "helpless" and vulnerable convoy.

But are these convoys truly helpless? "Not hardly," as the GI's say. Not any more.

On 2 September 1967 a convoy of two and one half ton cargo trucks from the 8th Group's 54th Battalion was returning in the late afternoon from Pleiku. At a point about eight miles west of An Khe, the convoy was savagely hit by a large VC force. In a brief but furious action, the ambushers killed eight drivers, wounded nineteen more, destroyed twelve vehicles and damaged eighteen. It was a decisive VC victory. Not a single attacker was killed. It was all too reminiscent of the fate of the French convoys in their struggle against Viet-Minh forces for the control of Indo-China.

It also marked the beginning of an all-out enemy effort to close QL #19 and sever the Allied supply line westward.

Since this initial ambush, the VC have sprung many similar traps. They continually have sniped at convoy vehicles, particularly "stragglers" who have suffered minor roadway maintenance problems.

Mines are another hazard to the roadways. Sometimes as many as a half dozen will be planted in a hundred-meter stretch of road--presenting as much a danger to civilian trucks and buses as military vehicles.

And finally, the VC have made a determined effort to blow vital bridges and culverts (there is an average of one every three miles between Qui Nhon and Pleiku; two per mile between Qui Nhon and Chu Lai).

The VC have been frustrated in their efforts to halt, or even disrupt convoy operations. Not only frustrated, but hurt. For the 8th Group has developed countermeasures that have enabled troops not only to survive the withering fire of these ambushers, but to lay down a superior barrage of fire in return. Convoys aren't just sitting ducks anymore. They have evolved into moving task forces, able to do more than take it, to dish it out as well.

The key is the HARDENED CONVOY CONCEPT, developed at 8th Group Headquarters solely for operations in a guerilla war.

"This concept," says Captain James Williams of the Group Operations Staff, "is dynamic and revolutionary. It has made 'Charlie' think twice before hitting us, and suffer the consequences when he does."

This feeling is echoed by the "road managers," usually lieutenants, who serve as convoy commanders and are responsible for the actual operation of the convoys on the highway.

"My lieutenants now feel like they have an attack, not just transport capability," says Captain Jack Coleman, whose 597th Trans Company was the first medium truck company in the Central Highlands. "This HARDENED CONCEPT will play a vitally important transportation role in all future wars of this type."

The HARDENED CONCEPT is, in essence, nothing more than a formation--an order of march--utilizing special communications and armor plated equipment for control purposes and fire power. The result ties together, greater than ever before, all elements of the march force with the security forces in the area, as well as Group and Battalion units.

8th Group convoys run in serials, approximately five minutes apart, made up of from thirty to thirty-five task vehicles. At the front of each ten to fifteen vehicle march units is a quarter-ton truck, equipped with radio and staffed with a driver, and officer or NCO who carries a combination of weapons, and a machine gunner who operates a pedestal mounted automatic weapon.

To the rear of this "gun jeep" is placed a two and one half ton truck that is armor plated, sand bagged and staffed with a driver, assistant driver, and, a crew in the bed operating a combination of weapons. These armored "deuce and a half's" are considered a temporary measure, however, until the Commando Armored Car, V-100, can be obtained.

Midway between the ten or so task vehicles that follow the two lead trucks is a veritable "smoke bringer" that instills more fear into the hearts of potential VC attackers than any other single piece of equipment in convoy--the five ton truck-mounted Quad Fifty weapons system. These Quad Fifties provide an enormous base of fire power with their four electrically operated .50 caliber machine guns capable of firing over 2000 rounds per minute. The Quad Fifty vehicle is also equipped with a radio capability.

Following at the rear of the serial is another two and one half ton "gun truck," followed by a "gun jeep" identical to the one in the lead. These two vehicles have the special task of policing up breakdowns, either repairing them on the spot or assisting them, by an old-fashioned push if necessary, to a secure area where they can be left to be retrieved by wrecker or a truck with tow bar.

The 8th Group has been testing two experimental self-loading Conex Transporters which have proven to be invaluable in recovery operations. No breakdown situation has been encountered which these Conex Transporters cannot easily handle.

Each following march unit is identical to the first.

It should be noted that to implement this life-saving, enemy-punishing HARDENED CONVOY CONCEPT, it is necessary to commit approximately 15% of the 8th Group's men and machines for security purposes.

The concept once again points out the American soldier's flexibility, including his ability to take a problem, analyze it, develop some possible solutions, choose the best one, and implement it into a plan of action.

Of course, all this would not be possible without the capable performance of that man so easily forgotten--the truck driver. The life of a driver in 8th Group revolves around his sleep cycle. Seven days per week, after six hours sleep, a driver spends fourteen to sixteen hours per day behind the wheel of his truck or performing driver maintenance on it. These drivers are a marvel. And they are remarkably professional.

Experience has taught them to be wary of an ambush. In particular, they keep an eye out for:

1. Changes in village makeup and activity
2. Absence of people on the streets
3. Gatherings of unusual looking people
4. Mining incidents
5. Sniper fire
6. Wires across the highway
7. Objects in or along the road

These drivers are briefed each morning on the life-saving necessity of keeping a minimum one hundred meter interval in convoy, driving out of an ambush kill zone if caught in it, getting their trucks off the road if disabled so others can pass, halting and dismounting if they are not yet in a kill zone, tracking the vehicle in front of them to avoid mines, wearing their flak gear and pots at all times, and on... and on... and on.

This information soon becomes second nature to the experienced driver, and since that ill-fated 2 September ambush many a life—and truck—has been saved..

It is significant, of course, that a driver, unlike an infantryman, is, by the very nature of his mission, inherently on the defensive. The driver/soldier in the 8th Group is trained, equipped and motivated to insure that maximum utilization is made of his vehicle and time. The mission is to provide a service of providing efficient, effective highway transport of goods forward. Despite the circumstances, morale never has been higher. The drivers & gunners take a lot of pride in the fact that although the NVA & VC have the element of surprise in an ambush, they are increasingly coming out on the short end of their encounters with the convoy.

A "running score" for the period following the disastrous 2 September 1967 ambush through 2 September 1968 shows the following:

36 ambushes

38 convoy personnel KHA

204 convoy personnel WHA

116 known enemy KIA

15 known enemy WIA

287 vehicles destroyed or seriously damaged.

If the enemy activity is the most critical and costly constraint on 8th Group convoy operations, it certainly is not the only one.

There is, for instance, a serious lack of Material Handling Equipment, so that customer off loading (especially in the most forward areas) is often painfully time consuming. Because of the road closing times, the off loading problem often results in a requirement for vehicles to RON (Remain Over Night). To adjust for this, the cargo capacity of the vehicles remaining overnight must be deducted from the potential capacity of the Group fleet the next morning.

Though the highway from Qui Nhon as far west on LG #19 as Pleiku has been paved, the bulk of the road net in the 8th Group Area of Operations is still in poor repair. An immediate result is unusually demanding maintenance problems. The steep grades encountered at the An Khe and Mang Giang Passes are also rough on task vehicles, especially when, more often than not, they are loaded beyond their capacity.

Weather places more restrictions on convoy operations. The Monsoon Season not only makes for super-slick road surfaces, but the heavy rains often wash out bridges and culverts. Depending on the damage, Engineers require from three hours to three days to make the necessary repairs.

Paradoxically, during the dry season, the dust is so great that driver vision is often, and quite literally, reduced to only a few feet. Dust and mud also cause obvious maintenance problems.

The Vietnamese people themselves pose yet another problem. They still have not learned how to live with traffic, and it is not at all unusual for "papasan", "Mamasan", "babysan" or all three to stroll directly in front of a lumbering five ton tractor pulling a trailer loaded with 30,000 pounds of cement. So the driver must not only be alert for "Charlie," but for his peasant "cousins".

Movement planning, or more accurately, the almost total lack of it means that priorities can, and often do, change right up to IP (Departure) time. This creates obvious problems and confusion that can only be corrected when a system of programming and priorities can be instituted.

Communications, vital to any military operation, often are snarled within the Group's area of operations. Group customers are diverse, including the 1st Cavalry Division and the Americal Division. Yet, though operating in the inter-division theater, only battalion-sized signal equipment is authorized.

What the 8th Transportation Group is doing then, is pioneering. Faced with unprecedented problems, for which there are no ready-made, experience-tested answers, personnel are having, literally, to field the problems as they come. These decisions are writing a bold new chapter in Transportation Corps history.

The Group makes special use of the experience of others. Accounts of the experience of the French, the Red Ball Express in WW II as well as "Lessons Learned" by current operating experience are primers for the officers and men alike.

LTC John H. Burke, the Executive Officer of the 8th Group (he at one time commanded the Group's 124th Battalion in Pleiku), summed it up this way:

"There are no solutions in the Transportation School's text books to the challenges we're facing here. What we're doing, then, is really quite simple. We're just writing a new textbook. Our own!!"

To the military planner, the real significance of what the 8th Group is doing lies in the fact that the weather, terrain and political climate in much of the world closely resembles that found in Vietnam. If we are to be prepared to wage war and logistically support our forces under these conditions we must develop the material, personnel and systems best suited to the environment. The 8th Group is doing exactly that every day that the "Truck-Master" shouts the start of convoys and the first truck rolls out on to the highway.



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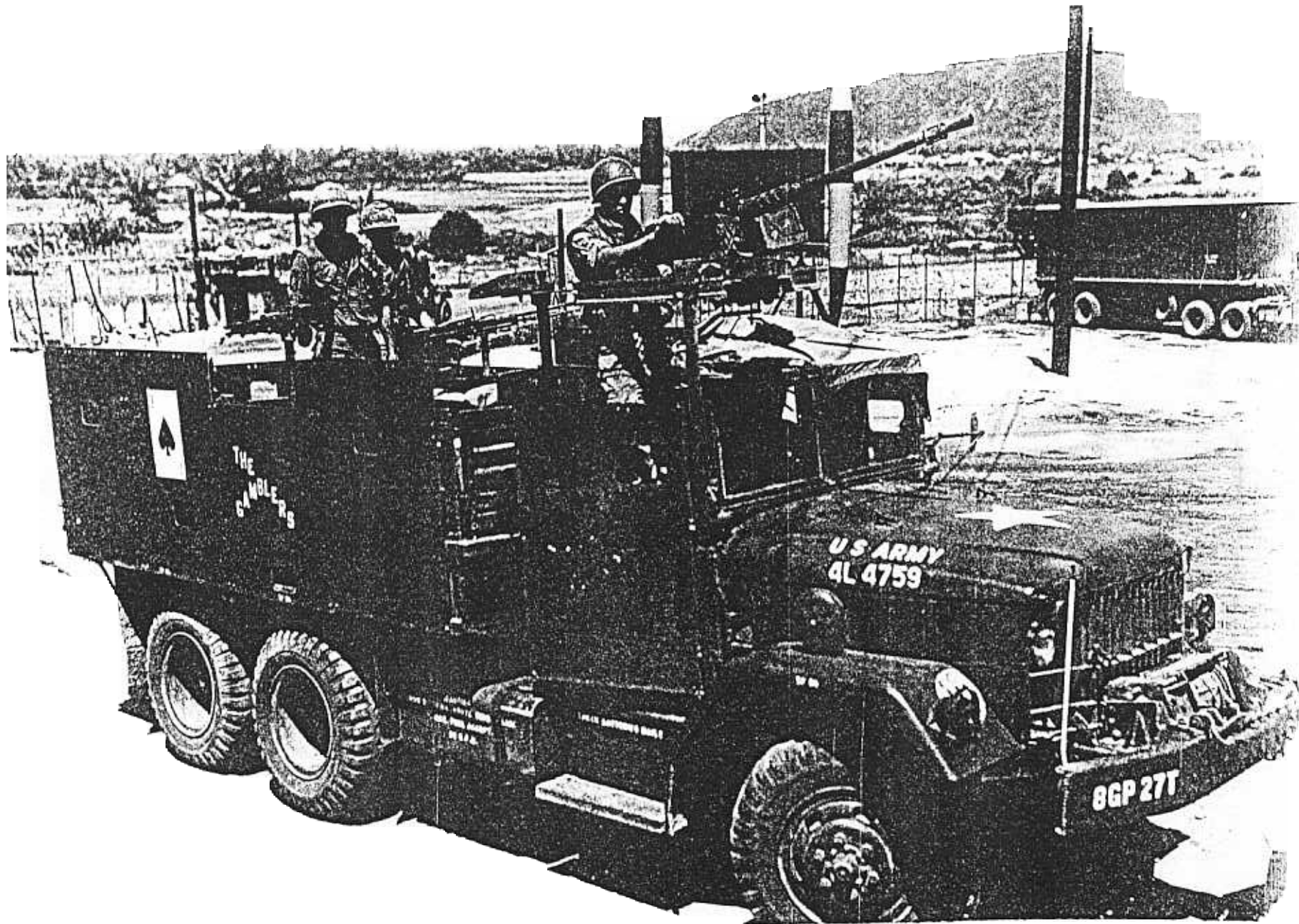
"GUN JEEP"

THE GUN JEEP OF THE 8TH GROUP IS THE M151, $\frac{1}{4}$ TON TRUCK. A NORMAL CREW CONSISTS OF A DRIVER, GUNNER, AND VEHICLE COMMANDER. THE GUNNER SITS ON A SPECIAL RAISED SEAT CONTROLLING A M60 MACHINE GUN. THE VEHICLE COMMANDER, IN ADDITION TO HIS M16 RAPID FIRING RIFLE, CARRIES A M79 GRADE LAUNCHER.



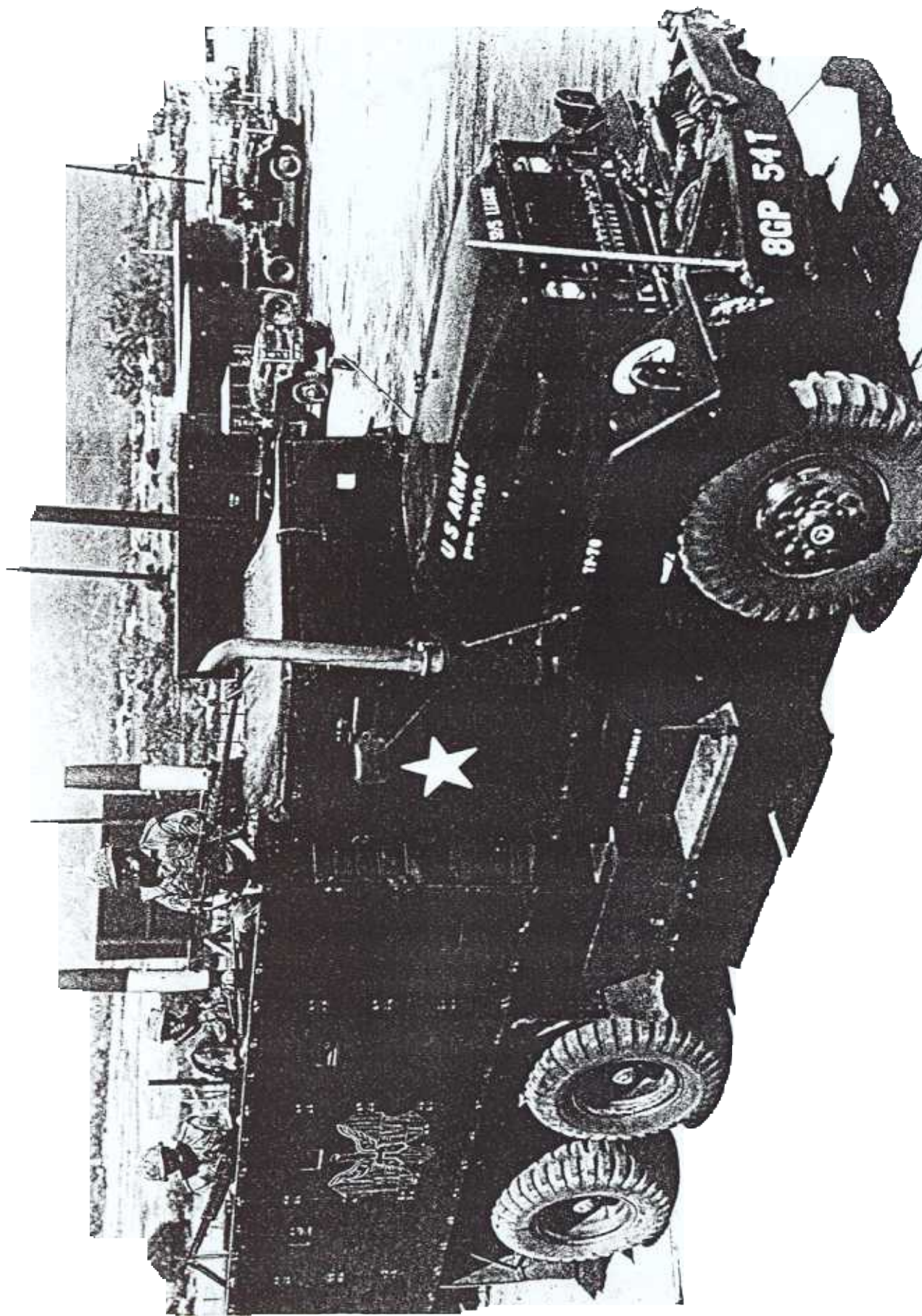
3/4 TON GUN TRUCK

THE 3/4 TON ARMORED TRUCK IS USED AS AN ADMINISTRATIVE VEHICLE, eg., MAIL RUNS, PERSONNEL SHUTTLE, etc., AT NIGHT AND IN INSECURE AREAS.



"GAMBLERS"

TYPICAL 6TH GROUP 2 ½ TON GUN TRUCK WITH ARMORED PLATING. THIS VEHICLE HAS SANDBAGGED FLOORS, 2 PEDESTAL-MOUNTED M60 MACHINE GUNS WITH SANDBAGGED EMPLACEMENTS FOR ADDED PROTECTION, AND A M79 GRENAДИER. THE VEHICLE COMMANDER CONTROLS THE VEHICLE FROM HIS RING-MOUNTED 50 CAL MACHINE GUN.



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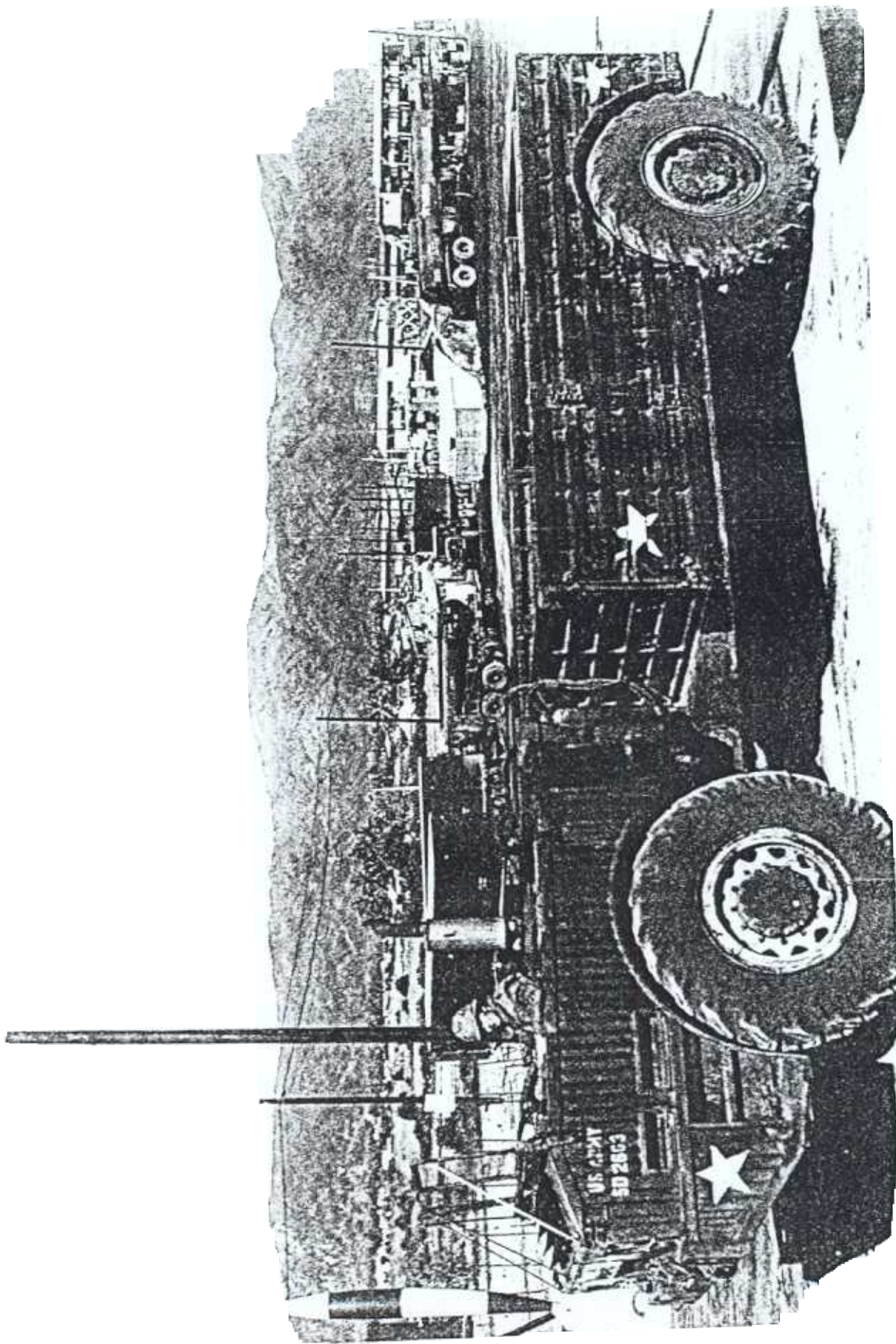
"NANCY"

2 1/2 TON M35A2 TRUCK CARGO, MOUNTED WITH QUAD 50 MACHINE GUN. CONSISTS OF 4 50 CAL GUNS CAPABLE OF FIRING INDIVIDUALLY, IN PAIRS, OR ALL FOUR AT ONE TIME. THE VEHICLE COMMANDER OPERATES A M60 MACHINE GUN AND IS EQUIPPED WITH A M79 GRENADE LAUNCHER.

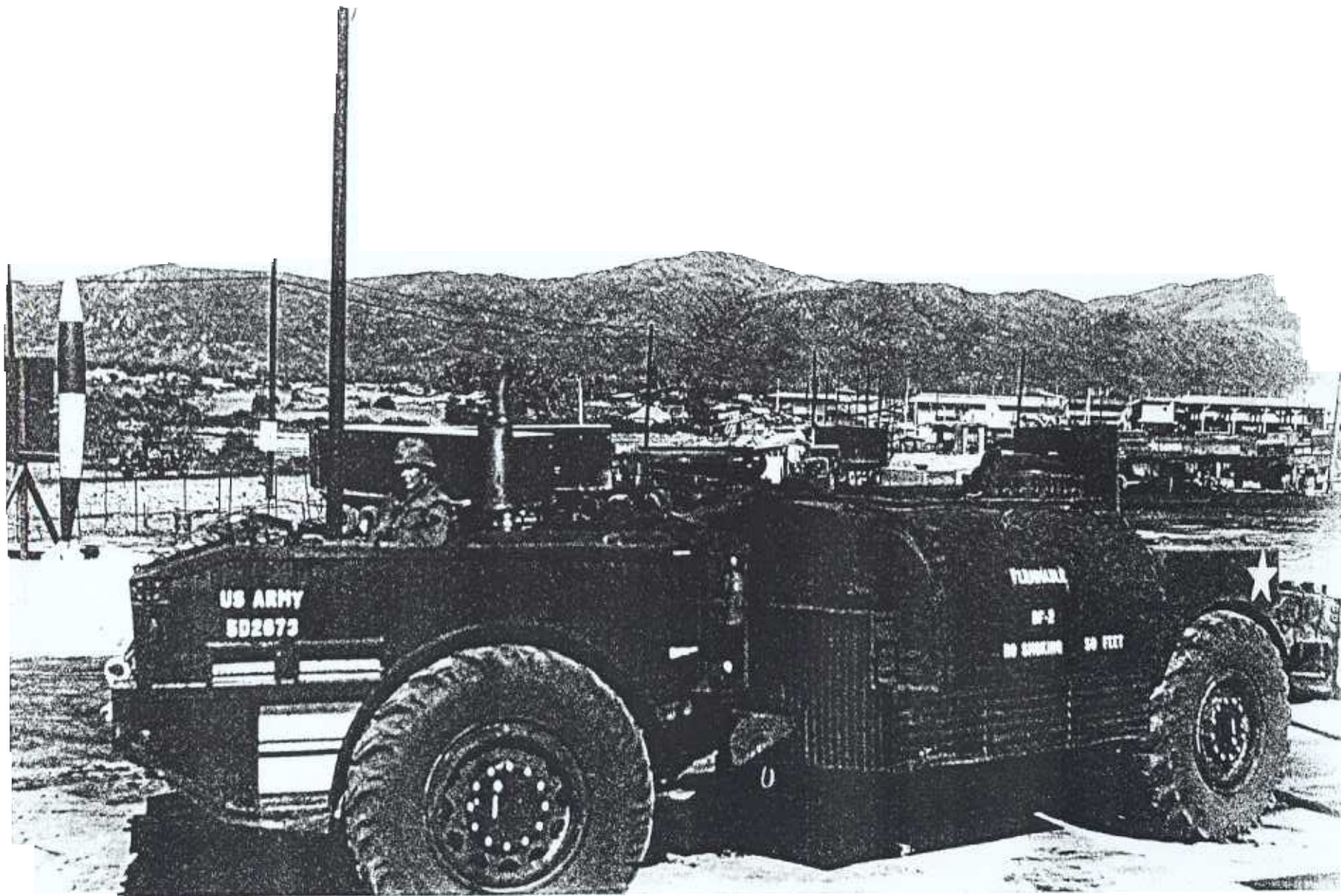


THE "BIG KAHUNA"

A M54A2, 5 TON TRUCK, MOUNTED WITH THE STRIPPED DOWN HULL OF AN ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIER. THIS THIRD GENERATION OF 8TH GROUP HARDENED VEHICLES WAS BORN OUT OF THE NECESSITY OF FINDING A WAY TO REPLACE THE ARMOR PLATED VEHICLES DESTROYED DURING A PERIOD IN WHICH THERE WAS NO AVAILABLE STEEL PLATE IN THE SUPPLY SYSTEM. THE BIG KAHUNA IS ARMED WITH TWO M60 MACHINE GUNS, ONE 50 CALIBER MACHINE GUN AND ONE M79 GRENADE LAUNCHER.

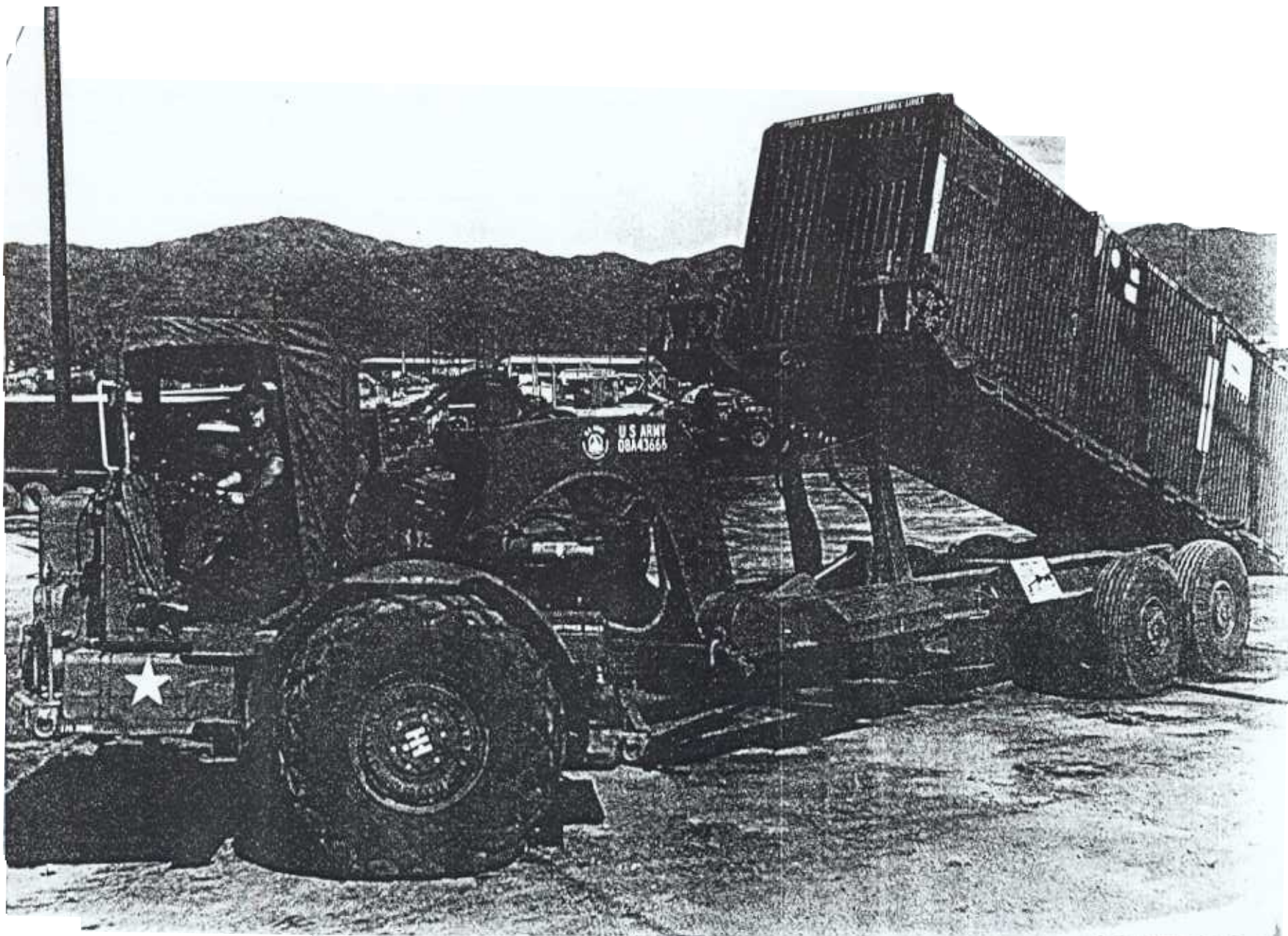


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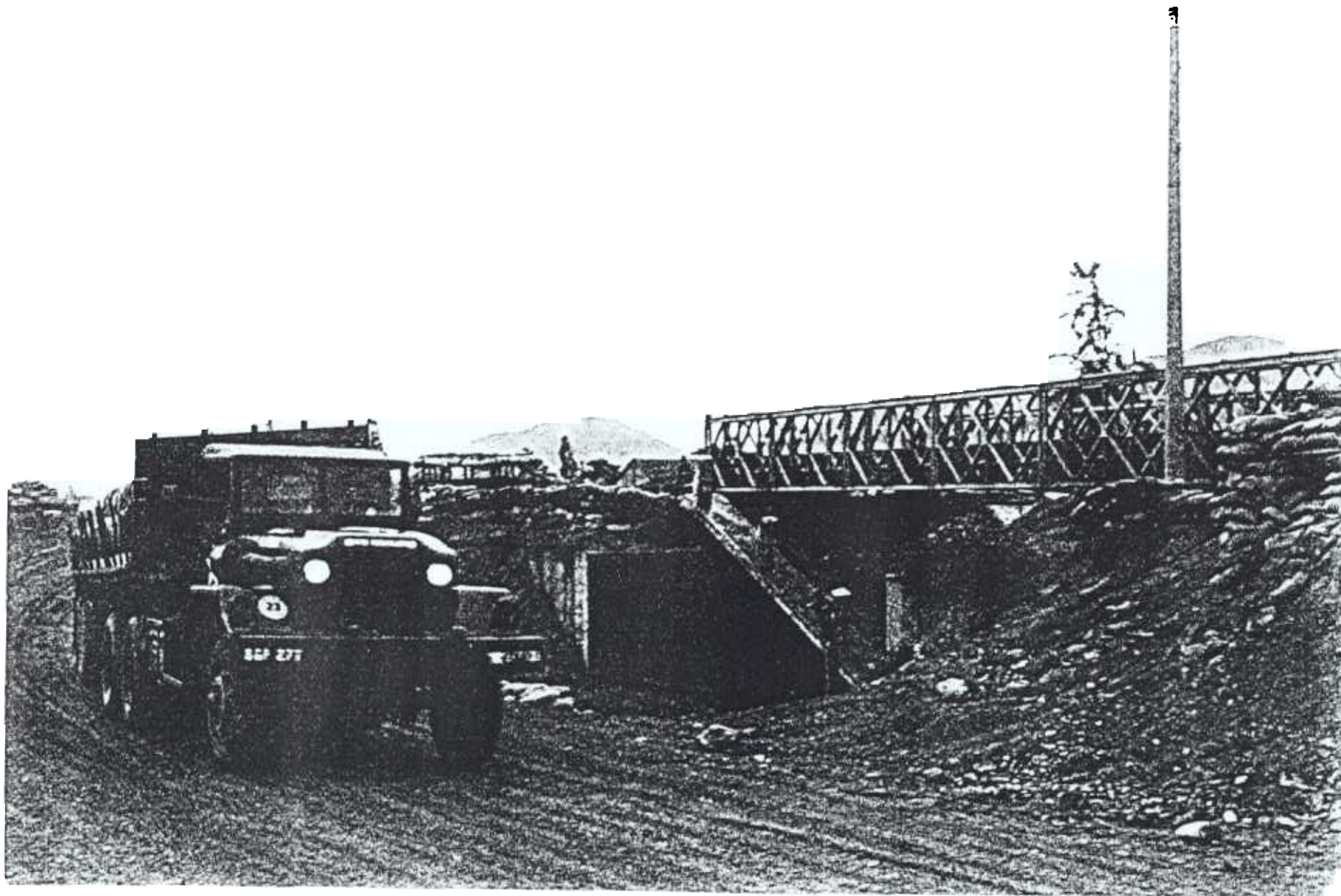
G-6JER TANKER

A 2,500 GALLON, ALL-TERRAIN, ALL-WEATHER AMPHIBIOUS FUEL TANKER USED IN PROVIDING DIRECT SUPPORT TO 4TH INFANTRY DIVISION UNITS IN DAN TO, KONTUM, AND BAN ME THUOT.



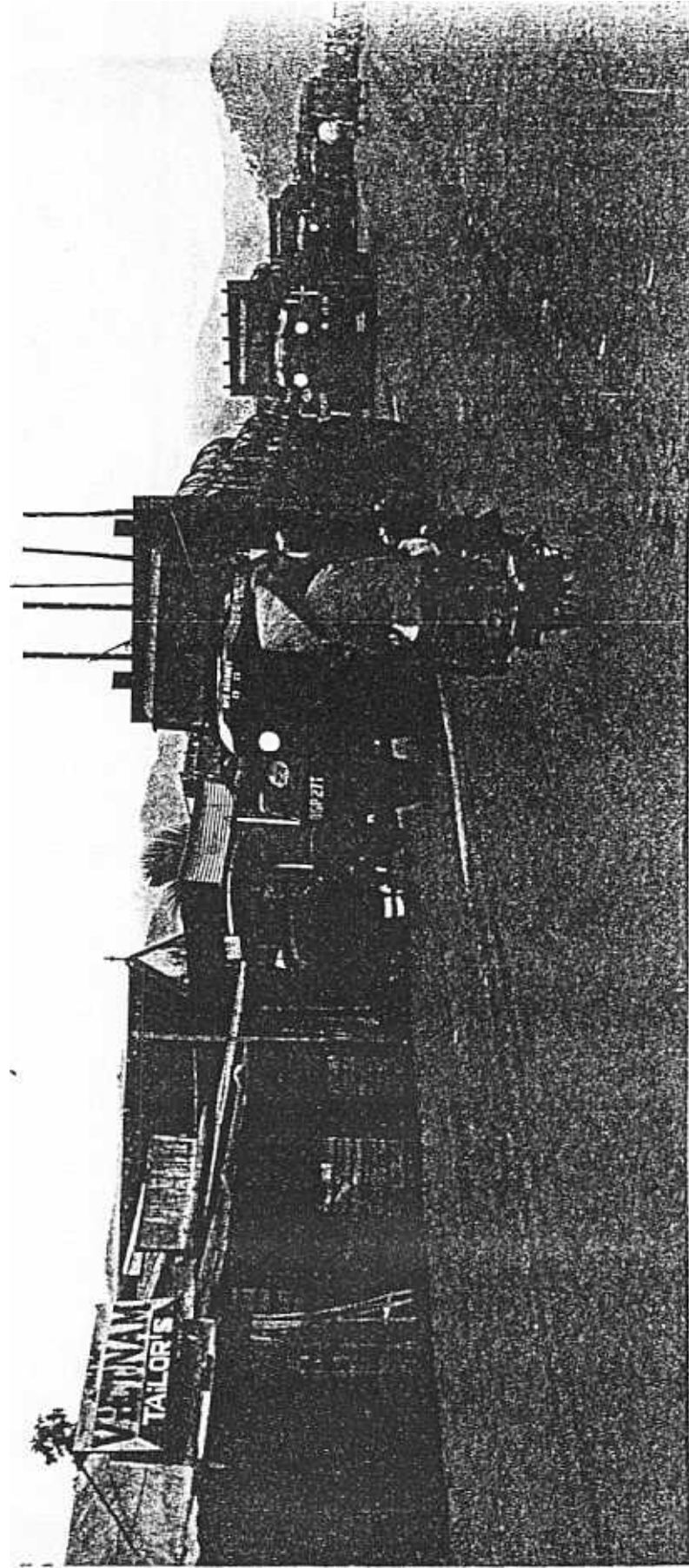
BIG "T"

8TH GROUP IS CONDUCTING, FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY, THE SERVICE TEST OF THE CONEX TRANSPORTER. THE TWO EXPERIMENTAL MODELS ARE UTILIZED IN DUTY OPERATIONS AND REPORTS ARE RENDERED PERIODICALLY TO AMC. IN ADDITION TO THEIR PRIMARY PURPOSE AS A CONEX TRANSPORTER, THE VEHICLE IS OUTSTANDING AS A RETRIEVER OF DISABLED VEHICLES, ESPECIALLY IF THE RETRIEVAL OPERATION MUST BE CONDUCTED IN A RICE PADDY ENVIRONMENT.



BRIDGE DESTROYED

BRIDGE ALONG ROUTE DESTROYED BY ENEMY HOSTILE ACTION. WHETHER ENEMY HOSTILE ACTION OR RAIN FLOODS, WHEN A BRIDGE GOES OUT ALL CONVOYS ARE HELD-UP UNTIL U.S. ARMY ENGINEERS CAN REPAIR THE DAMAGE OR CONSTRUCT A BY-PASS. THERE ARE NO ALTERNATE ROUTES.



TYPICAL EDGE OF TOWN" SCEN ALONG ROUTE OF 8: GROUP 'S CONVOY

QUI HON PLEIKU AND QUI NHON DUC PHO

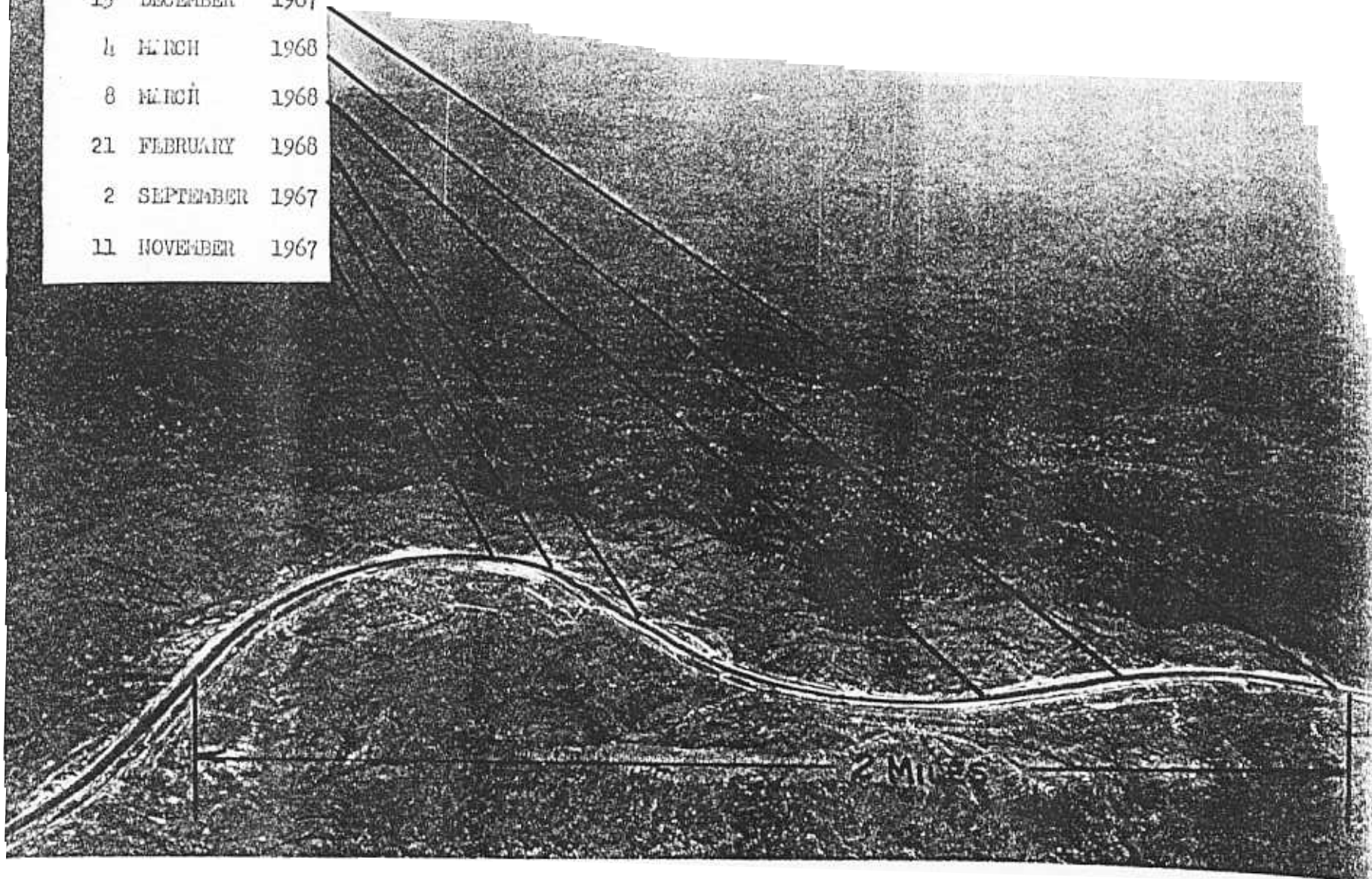


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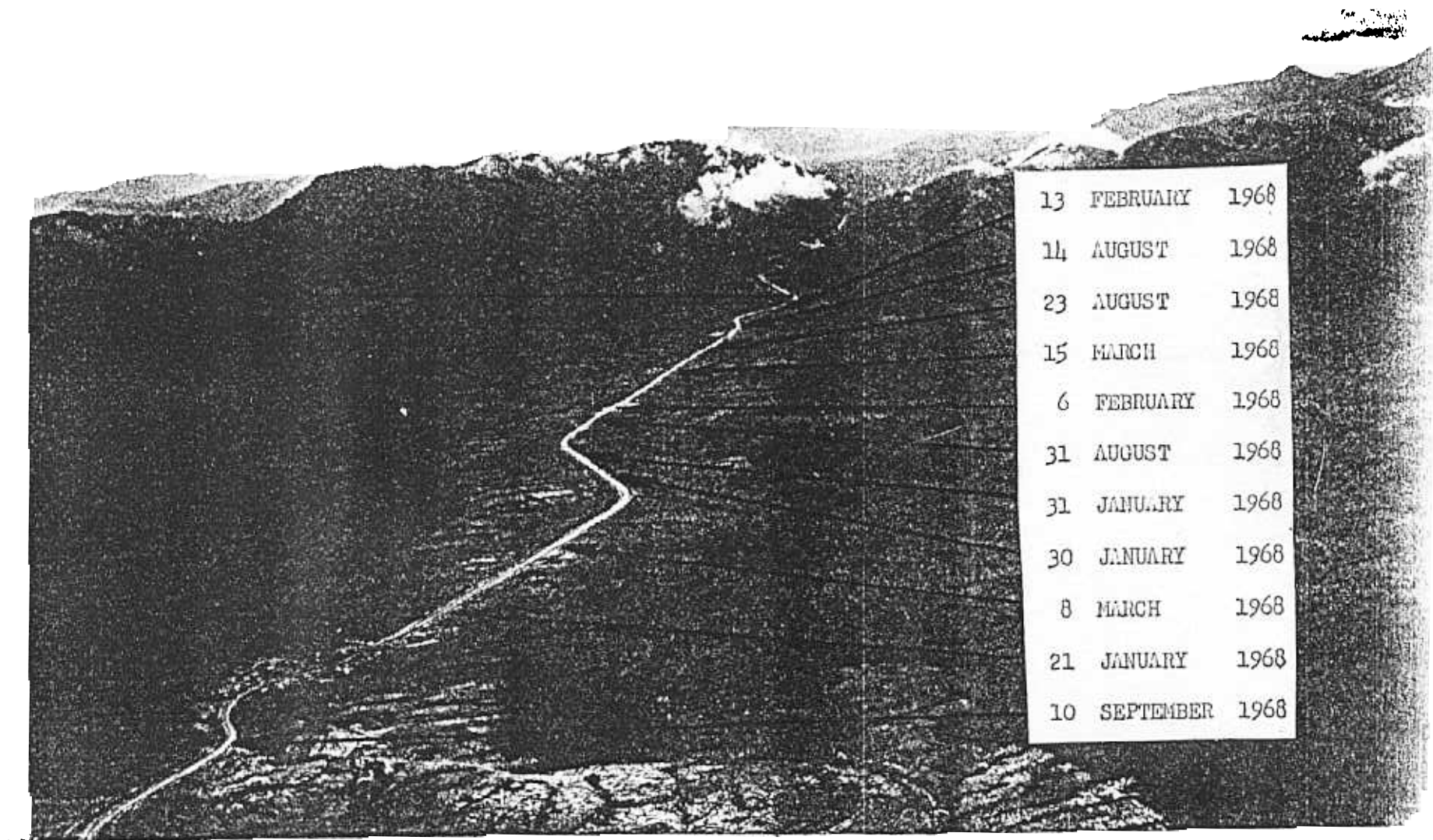
AN KHE PASS
CLOSE-UP VIEW OF ROADSIDE FOLIAGE THROUGH AN KHE PASS.

15 DECEMBER 1967
4 MARCH 1968
8 MARCH 1968
21 FEBRUARY 1968
2 SEPTEMBER 1967
11 NOVEMBER 1967



AMBUSH ALLEY

ANOTHER PORTION OF ROAD BETWEEN AN KHE AND MANG GIANG PASS. IN THE 2 MILES REPRESENTED IN THIS AERIAL PHOTO THERE HAVE BEEN 6 AMBUSHES ON 8TH GROUP C INVOYS IN THE PAST 11 MONTHS. NOTE THE AREA ADJACENT TO THE ROAD WHICH HAS BEEN CLEARED BY ROME FLOW.

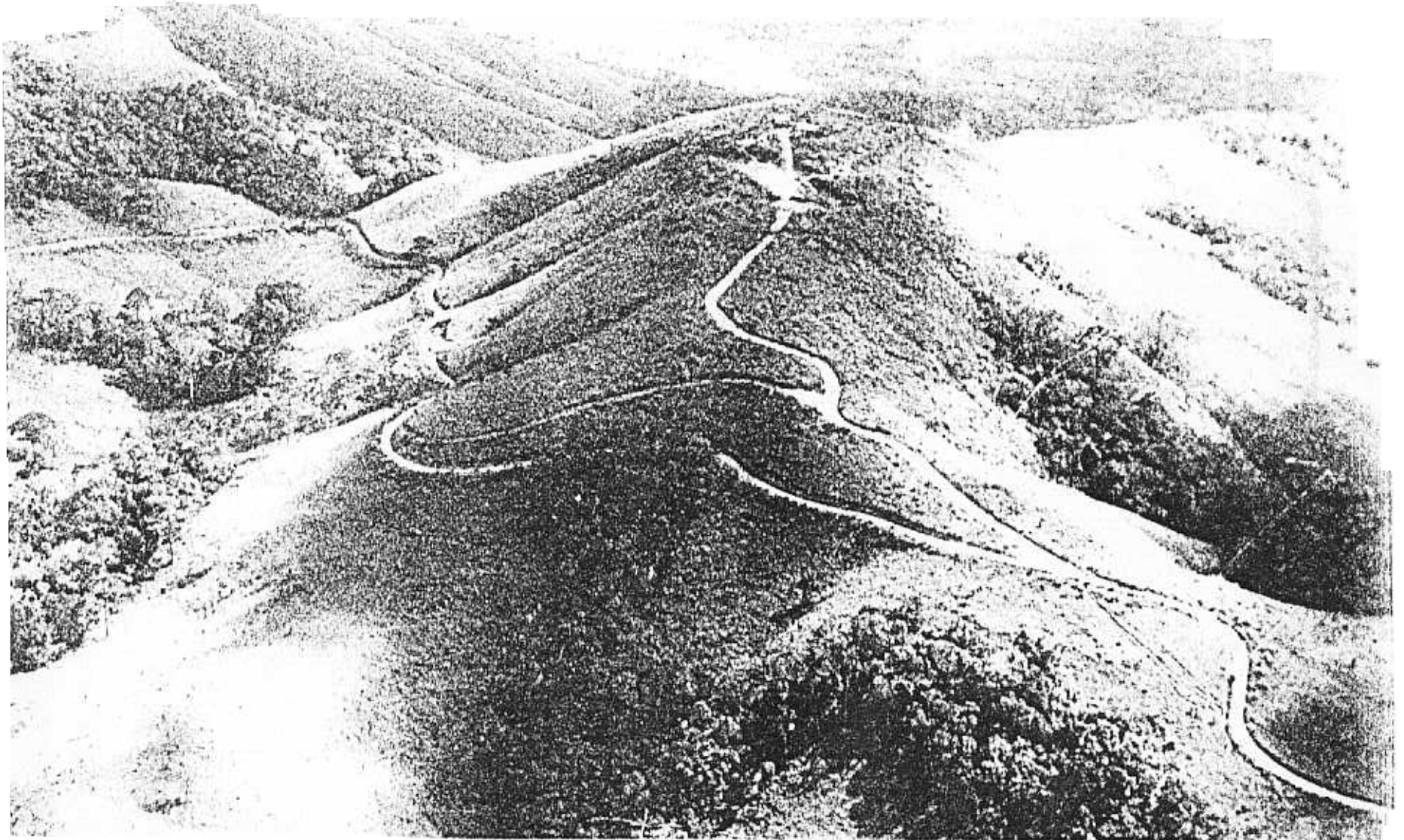


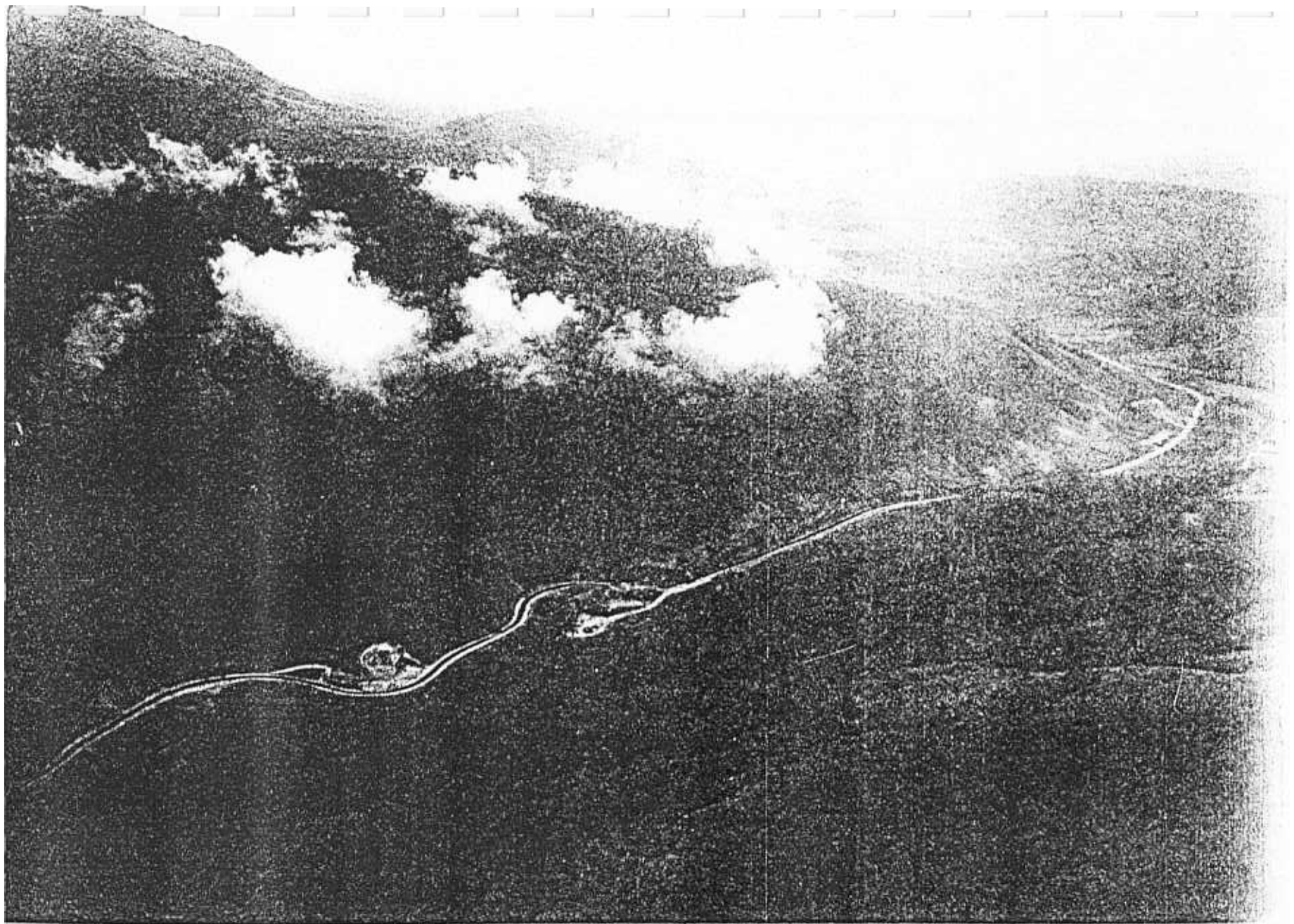
13	FEBRUARY	1968
14	AUGUST	1968
23	AUGUST	1968
15	MARCH	1968
6	FEBRUARY	1968
31	AUGUST	1968
31	JANUARY	1968
30	JANUARY	1968
8	MARCH	1968
21	JANUARY	1968
10	SEPTEMBER	1968

AMBUSH ALLEY

THIS 3 MILE STRETCH OF ROAD APPROACHING THE BASE OF MANG GIANG PASS, IS THE MOST DANGEROUS PORTION OF THE ROUTE FROM QUI NHON TO PLEIKU. THERE HAVE BEEN 11 AMBUSHES ON 8TH GROUP CONVOYS IN THE PAST 11 MONTHS.

Aerial view of a road network in the Central Highlands





MANG GIANG PASS

AERIAL VIEW OF MANG GIANG PASS, LOOKING WEST FROM AN KHE TO PLEIKU. THIS 3 MILE STEEP GRADE IS HEAVILY WOODED ON BOTH SIDES OF THE ROAD AND IS PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE TO HOSTILE ENEMY ATTACKS.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, US ARMY SUPPORT COMMAND, QUI NHON
APO 96238

AVCA QN-CO

12 April 1968

SUBJECT: Recommendation for Presidential Unit Citation (Army)

THRU: Commanding General
1st Logistical Command
APO 96384

TO: Commanding General
United States Army Vietnam
ATTN: AVHAG-PD
APO 96375

1. In accordance with paragraph 6, USARV Reg 672-3, it is recommended that the Presidential Unit Citation (Army) be awarded to the 8th Transportation Group (Motor Transport) and attached units for extraordinary heroism in action against an armed enemy while in support of military operations in the Republic of Vietnam during the period 2 September 1967 through 31 March 1968. The 8th Transportation Group (Motor Transport) and attached units have displayed such gallantry, determination, and esprit de corps in accomplishing their mission under extremely difficult and hazardous conditions as to set them apart and above other units performing a like mission within the theater.

2. During the cited period, despite the extreme hazards resulting from direct enemy action, the 8th Transportation Group (Motor Transport) and attached units accomplished their assigned combat support and combat service support mission of line haul to front line forces in the face of daily interdiction of lines of communication by enemy ambush, mines and sniper firing. Constantly aware of the dependency of the tactical forces upon the cargo moved forward, the officers and men of assigned and attached units risked danger of death and injury to transport the necessary material and equipment over insecure and enemy infested roads, in the I and II Corps areas, encompassing the vital coastal and highland regions of South Vietnam.

3. The ferocity of the enemy activity, which during the period resulted in 23 KIA, 103 WIA, and 161 vehicles damaged and/or destroyed, did not lessen the morale and desire of the men of 8th Group to succeed. On

AVCA QN-CO

12 April 1968

SUBJECT: Recommendation for Presidential Unit Citation Army)

the contrary, the intensity of the enemy's acts has had the effect of joining the members of the command into a single will to accomplish the mission regardless of the odds or dangers involved. It has, to quote General Creighton W. Abrams, made "frustrated tankers" out of the 8th Group truckers. The state of morale of the individual soldier and the esprit de corps of the unit is best exemplified by the remark made in a letter from the Chief of Chaplains (Major General) Sampson to the Commanding Officer of the 8th Group following his visit to the unit - "I cited the Dedication Ceremony of the 8th Group Chapel to the G-1 (DCSPER) Conference as a highlight of my Far East trip and a proof of high morale." The bravery and heroism of the truckers has earned them the unprecedented number, for a logistical unit, of 10 Bronze Star Medals with "V" device, 18 Army Commendation Medals with "V" device and 92 Purple Hearts. Pending are recommendations for 5 Bronze Star Medals with "V" device, 15 Army Commendation Medals with "V" device and 14 Purple Hearts.

4. Following the ambush of an 8th Group convoy returning to Qui Nhon from Pleiku on 2 September 1967, in which the Group suffered 7 KIA, 17 WIA, and 30 vehicles damaged/destroyed, a dramatic change in operations has taken place resulting in new methods, techniques and doctrine for the operation of logistical convoys in a theater of operations. The "Hardened Vehicle Concept" of providing convoy security from within was formulated and implemented by the Group. This concept provides rapid and heavy retaliatory fire within the critical first three to five minutes of an ambush, which cannot be obtained within the necessary time frame from tactical forces located at strong points along the MSR. The success of this concept can be judged from the results of succeeding ambushes. For example, the ambush of 24 November 1967 resulted in enemy losses of 42 KIA, 4 WIA/PCW while 8th Group personnel suffered 3 KIA and WIA. On 4 December 1967, an ambush resulted in enemy losses of 13 KIA and 2 WIA while 8th Group personnel suffered 1 KIA and 8 WIA.

5. Basically, the concept calls for one radio jeep with M-60 machine gun mounted and one "hardened," armor plated, 2½ ton or 5 ton cargo vehicle armed with two M-60 machine guns and one M-79 for every ten (10) task vehicles. In addition, one quad fifty gun mounted on a cargo vehicle is provided for each march unit. PRC 25 radios are placed in the gun trucks to allow the convoy commander control in the event of an ambush. Recently ring mounted 50 caliber machine guns have been dispersed throughout the convoy on task vehicles. The "hardening" of all jeeps and the armor plating of the doors of the cabs of task vehicles is contemplated in the final plan. This totally new concept, a first in transportation history, has been recommended as doctrine at the United States Army Transportation School by Brigadier General Jack C. Fuson, Director of Transportation.

AVCA QN-CO

12 April 1968

SUBJECT: Recommendation for Presidential Unit Citation (Army)

6. During the cited period, assigned/attached units of this command engaged in Operations Francis Marion, McArthur, Patrick, Wheeler Wollowa, Dazzelem, Pershing, Walker and Maeng-Ho 9 and 10. In addition to cargo moved, the Group engaged in moves involving units of the 4th Infantry Division and 1st Cavalry Division, the 173rd Airborne Brigade and the 5th Special Forces Group. The entire 11th Light Infantry Brigade was also moved upon its arrival in country, from Qui Nhon Port to Duc Pho. The move involved approximately 1170 vehicles, 1200 troops and 4465 short tons a distance of 83 miles. Units of the Group provided command, control and security for the convoys ranging in size from 150 to 270 vehicles daily. Following the move, the Americal Division Commander, Major General S.W. Koster, stated in a letter of commendation to the Commanding Officer of the 8th Group, that the operation conducted by the 8th Trans Group was the most professional transportation job he had witnessed in his military career. Also, lines of communication (LOC) were extended during the period West and North to Dak To and Poley Kleng, North to Duc Pho and South to Tuy Hoa, resulting in the Group providing the longest Line of Communication in the theater.

7. It was during the cited period that 8th Group supported the beleaguered tactical force during the Battle of Dak To. The achievements of the officers and men of the command during that all important battle brought praise from the tactical commanders concerned, to include General Westmoreland.

8. Facing conditions never experienced by a Transportation Truck Unit, the command moved 597,572 short tons of cargo and 4,455,170 gallons of POL and transported 21,415 personnel over 7,331,924 miles during the cited period. Major General W.R. Peers, Commanding General, Fourth Infantry Division in a letter of commendation stated that the rapid aggressive reaction of the 8th Group truckers during an ambush undoubtedly reduced the number of casualties and also enabled the reaction forces to flank and engage the enemy. LTC R.L. Runkle, Commanding Officer, 1st Battalion 5th Cavalry, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile), stated that, in the ambush of 4 December, three enemy assaults were, "repulsed because of determination and bravery of each individual driver to stand and fight." He equated their coolness under fire to that of seasoned combat troops. On 16 November 1967, Lieutenant General Rosson, Commanding General of 1st Field Force Vietnam stated to the Commanding General, Qui Nhon Support Command that "these 8th Group truckers are the unsung heroes of the war." In spite of the daily exposure to possible ambush the morale of these dedicated truckers soared and each daily convoy run was regarded as an individual challenge.

9. The "Frustrated Tankers" of the 8th Group also performed, in a dual role as infantry. Battalions of the Group conducted ambush patrols on a nightly basis and provided listening posts with a force of twelve men

AVCA QN-CO

12 April 1968

SUBJECT: Recommendation for Presidential Unit Citation (Army)

men ranging 2-5 miles from base camps as part of the overall defense sector plan. These elements have engaged enemy forces ranging in size from 30-100 men resulting in enemy KIA/WIA and the capture of supplies and equipment.

10. Spurred on by the knowledge of their tremendous contribution to the war effort, the officers and men of the 8th Transportation Group (Motor Transport) continued to push forward through the endless obstacles of enemy action, terrain and weather to accomplish their mission. Service with confidence; support without equal, the 8th Transportation Group (Motor Transport) and attached units have proven that they are highly deserving of the Presidential Unit Citation (Army).

INDEX OF INCLOSURES

1. Proposed Citation
2. Assigned and Attached Units
3. Support of Combat Operations
4. List of Individual Awards
5. Synopsis of Ambush - 2 Sep 67
6. Synopsis of Ambush - 11 Nov 67
7. Synopsis of Ambush - 24 Nov 67
8. Synopsis of Ambush - 4 Dec 67
9. Synopsis of Ambush - 21 Jan 68
10. Synopsis of Ambush - 25 Jan 68
11. Synopsis of Ambush - 30 Jan 68
12. Synopsis of Ambush - 31 Jan 68
13. Synopsis of Ambush - 7 Feb 68
14. Synopsis of Ambush - 13 Feb 68
15. Synopsis of Ambush - 21 Feb 68
16. Synopsis of Ambush - 4 Mar 68
17. Synopsis of Ambush - 8 Mar 68
18. Synopsis of Ambush - 16 Mar 68
19. Synopsis of Ambush - 22 Mar 68
20. Impact of Enemy Action (Chart)
21. Hardened Convoy Concept
22. Letter of Commendation - LTG W.B. Rosson - 23 Nov 67
23. Letter of Commendation - MG W.R. Peers - 27 Nov 67
24. Remarks of Gen W.C. Westmoreland at Dak To - 1 Dec 67
25. Letter of Commendation - LTG R.L. Runkle, Inf. 6 Dec 67
26. Remarks of LTG W.B. Rosson - 16 Dec 67
27. Letter of Appreciation MG S.W. Koster - 29 Dec 67
28. Letter - Chaplain (MG) F.L. Sampson - Chief of Chaplains
29. Letter - Col Tran-Van-Xoi - Director of Defense Transportation of RVNAF Saigon
30. Extract - "Transportation Developments" - Ft Eustis, Va.
31. Operational Performance Chart
32. Military Justice Report

LIST OF ASSIGNED UNITS

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>PERIOD</u>	<u>PREVIOUS US UNIT AWARDS</u>
HHD, 8th Trans Gp (MT) APO 96238	19Oct66 - PRESENT	Meritorious Unit Commendation European Theater
HHD, 27th Trans Bn(Trk) APO 96238	22Oct66 - PRESENT	Meritorious Unit Commendation Vietnam
2nd Trans Co (MdmTrk) APO 96238	22Oct66 - PRESENT	
58th Trans Co (LtTrk) APO 96238	22Oct66 - PRESENT	
444th Trans Co (LtTrk) APO 96238	22Oct66 - PRESENT	Presidential Unit Citation WWII Ardennes
585th Trans Co (MdmTrk) APO 96238	21May67 - 25Feb68	
597th Trans Co (MdmTrk) APO 96238	22Oct66 - PRESENT	Meritorious Unit Commendation WWII European Theater
505th Trans Det (TTP) APO 96238	22Oct66 - PRESENT	
HHD, 54th Trans Bn(Trk) APO 96238	22Oct66 - PRESENT	
57th Trans Co (LtTrk) APO 96238	1Aug67 - 25Feb68	
512th Trans Co (LtTrk) APO 96238	22Oct66 - PRESENT	
523rd Trans Co LtTrk) APO 96238	22Oct66 - PRESENT	
666th Trans Co (LtTrk) APO 96238	14Aug67 - PRESENT	
669th Trans Co (LtTrk) APO 96238	22Oct66 - PRESENT	
HHD, 124th Trans Bn(Trk) APO 96318	25Jul67 - PRESENT	Presidential Unit Citation Philippines WWII Presidential Unit Citation WWII
64th Trans Co (MdmTrk) APO 96318	22Oct66 - PRESENT	Presidential Unit Citation WWII

LIST OF ASSIGNED UNITS CON'T

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>PERIOD</u>	<u>PREVIOUS US UNIT AWARDS</u>
88th Trans Co (LTrk) APO 96318	12Nov67 - PRESENT	
541st Trans Co (LtTrk) APO 96294	5Feb68 - PRESENT	Presidential Unit Citation WWII (2) Presidential Unit Citation Korea (2) Meritorious Unit Commendation
563rd Trans Co (MdmTrk) APO 96318	22Oct66 - PRESENT	
28th Trans Plt APO 96318	12Nov67 - PRESENT	
520th Trans Det (TTP) APO 96294	22Oct66 - PRESENT	

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 8TH TRANSPORTATION GROUP (MOTOR TRANSPORT)
APO 96238

AVCA QN-TG

18 December 1967

SUBJECT: Lieutenant General Rosson's Remarks, 16 December 1967

TO: Commanding Officer
Attached Units
8th Transportation Group (MT)
APO 96238

1. At a briefing of the Commanding General IFFV on 16 December 1967 a detailed discussion took place on the subject of convoy operations and convoy security. In the course of the discussion Lieutenant General Rosson stated, "these 8th Group truckers are the unsung heroes of this war." He went on to remark specifically that our record in the 24 November 1967 and 4 December 1967 ambushes was outstanding. He also said that our successful carrying of cargo on a daily basis over routes 1 & 19, right thru enemy territory, was the best indication of the progress we are making to win the war.

2. In thanking Brigadier General McBride for the outstanding logistical support rendered by US Army Support Command, Qui Nhon, LTG Rosson asked that his commendation be passed down to the individual soldier.

3. Please insure that General Rosson's desires in this matter are carried out.

TEL: Phu Thanh 775

/s/ Joe O. Bellino
/t/ JOE O. BELLINO
Colonel, TC
Commanding

"A TRUE COPY"


MANUEL J. ASENSIO, JR.
LTC, INF

AVCA QN-CG (29 Dec 67)
SUBJECT: Letter of Appreciation

1st Ind

HEADQUARTERS, US ARMY SUPPORT COMMAND, QUI NHON, APO 96238, 17 Jan 68

TO: Commanding Officer, 8th Transportation Group, APO 96238

I certainly agree with all the complimentary remarks made by Major General Koster. Please also accept my appreciation for yet another job well done.

/s/ George H. McBride
/t/ GEORGE H. McBRIDE
Brigadier General, USA
Commanding

"A TRUE COPY"


MANUEL J. ASENSIO, JR.
LTC, INF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 8TH TRANSPORTATION GROUP (MOTOR TRANSPORT)
APO 96238

SUBJECT: Support of Combat Operations

1. Operation MacArthur - A 4th Division operation conducted in the Central Highlands.
2. Operation Francis Marion - A 4th Division operation conducted in the Central Highlands.
3. Operation Patrick - A 4th Division operation conducted in Quang Ngai Province.
4. Operation Wheeler Wollowa - An Americal Division operation conducted in I Corps Area.
5. Operation Dazzelem - A 1st Air Cavalry Division operation conducted in the An Khe area.
6. Operation Pershing - A 1st Air Cavalry Division operation conducted in Binh Dinh Province and Bong Son Plain.
7. Operation Walker - A 4th Division operation conducted in the Bong Son Plain.
8. Operation Maeng-Ho 10 - A Tiger Division (ROK) operation on the Go Boi Plain.
9. Operation Maeng-Ho 9 - A Tiger Division (ROK) operation in Binh Dinh Province.

LIST OF INDIVIDUAL AWARDS

SILVER STAR MEDAL

<u>NAME/RANK</u>	<u>STATUS</u>
1LT WILSON, DAVID R	PENDING
SSG VAZQUEZ, JUAN F	PENDING
SP4 MILLHOFER, FREDERICK	PENDING

BRONZE STAR MEDAL WITH "V" DEVICE

COL BELLINO, JOE O	AWARDED
CPT COLEMAN, JACK W	AWARDED
1LT BRINK, DAVID E	AWARDED
2LT PANAGIS, ANDREW J	AWARDED
2LT SHIELDS, LEONARD J	PENDING
SGT BELCASTRO, DENNIS J	AWARDED
SP5 TREVINO, RAYMONDO L	AWARDED
SP4 HARDESTY, ROBERT W	AWARDED
SP4 HENSINGER, ARTHUR J	PENDING
SP4 MEREDITH, LARRY D	AWARDED
SP4 METCALF, CHARLES E	PENDING
SP4 WOOD, STEPHEN P	PENDING
PFC SAS, ROBERT	PENDING
PFC TIDWELL, JIMMY	AWARDED
PVT FOWLKE, ERNEST W	AWARDED

ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL WITH "V" DEVICE

1LT PURVIS, JAMES P	AWARDED
1LT STEEL, JAMES R	AWARDED
1LT TILLOTSON, RICHARD J	AWARDED
2LT LYON, JOSEPH	AWARDED
2LT STEGMAYER, PAUL J	PENDING
SGM PROCTOR, R.K. SR.	AWARDED
SFC WILLHITE, GEORGE F	AWARDED
SSG WILLIAMS, JOHN F	AWARDED
SGT BERNO, DOUGLAS G	AWARDED
SGT CHRISTOPHER, JERRY W	AWARDED
SGT SCHROEDER, LAWRENCE	AWARDED
SGT SNOOK, RANDY L	PENDING
SP5 HAFFERKAMP, GERALD	AWARDED
SP5 MCPHERSON, LESLIE	AWARDED
SP4 FOSTER, JOSEPH	AWARDED
SP4 LEMAR, LONNIE G	AWARDED
SP4 PERNO, ERNEST S	PENDING
PFC HALFORD, EDWARD G	AWARDED
PFC HYNES, JUERGEN	AWARDED
PFC MUNSON, ALVIN J	AWARDED
PFC ROZNOWSKI, STEPHEN N	PENDING
PFC UTZ, LLOYD	AWARDED
PVT BOYD, JAMES A	PENDING

LIST OF INDIVIDUAL AWARDS CONT

PURPLE HEART

<u>NAME/RANK</u>	<u>STATUS</u>
CPT COLEMAN, JACK W	AWARDED
CPT COLEMAN, JACK W	PENDING
1LT WILSON, DAVID W	AWARDED
2LT PANAGIS, ANDREW	AWARDED
2LT STEGMAYER, PAUL J	PENDING
1SG DAVIS, JESS W	AWARDED
SSG AVANT, JAMES	AWARDED
SSG COLLINS, CLAUDE L	AWARDED
SGT BELCASTRO, DENNIS J	AWARDED
SGT ORR, JAMES O	AWARDED
SP5 BROWN, EVERETT	AWARDED
SP5 CONNOR, ALTON	PENDING
SP5 DILLAHAY, ROBERT F	AWARDED
SP5 FRAZER, RAYMOND	AWARDED
SP5 HILL, TOMMY	AWARDED
SP5 JACKSON, JIMMIE	AWARDED
SP5 KLINE, KENNETH J	AWARDED
SP5 LINDSAY, LAWRENCE E III	AWARDED
SP5 MILLIGAN, AUTRY	AWARDED
SP5 PARKER, WILLIAM	AWARDED
SP5 QUICK, PETE A	AWARDED
SP5 RAYBURN, JIMMY	AWARDED
SP5 REYNOLDS, MICHAEL	AWARDED
SP4 BALL, GIPSEY	AWARDED
SP4 BEDOLLA, JOSEPH	AWARDED
SP4 BERSSET, JAMES	AWARDED
SP4 BEUKEMA, RICHARD	AWARDED
SP4 BORASKI, JOHN W	AWARDED
SP4 BOALMANN, BRUCE L	AWARDED
SP4 CAPPOLLONI, DENNIS	AWARDED
SP4 CELESTINO, JAMES A	AWARDED
SP4 CONN, STEVE J	AWARDED
SP4 CURRY, EUGENE	AWARDED
SP4 CZERWINSKI, FRANK F	AWARDED
SP4 EVANS, ROBERT L	AWARDED
SP4 FARLEY, ARTHUR L	AWARDED
SP4 FASIG, GARY W	PENDING
SP4 FOSTER, JOSEPH	AWARDED
SP4 GIROUX, FRANK W	AWARDED
SP4 GREENE, LAWRENCE	AWARDED
SP4 GUNTER, WILLIAM	AWARDED
SP4 HAKES, MICHAEL J	AWARDED
SP4 HARDESTY, ROBERT W	AWARDED
SP4 HENSINGER, ARTHUR J	AWARDED

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 8TH TRANSPORTATION GROUP (MOTOR TRANSPORT)
APO 96238

AVCA QN-TG

2 December 1967

SUBJECT: General Westmoreland's Remarks at Dak To, 1 December 1967

TO: Commanding Officers
All attached Units
8th Transportation Group (MT)
APO 96238

1. I have just returned from Dak To where I had the pleasure of attending a conference of major commanders whose units were involved in the Battle of Dak To.

2. General Westmoreland paid praise to the commanders of all the tactical forces committed, US and South Vietnamese. He especially noted that his remarks were directed to the battalion, company and platoon commanders. He then addressed General McBride by name and paid him the highest praise for the outstanding support rendered by Qui Nhon Support Command, particularly for the outstanding job done by the transportation truckers who kept the supplies coming so that the combat troops could keep pressure on the enemy.

3. In an earlier conversation General Westmoreland remarked that his Deputy, General Abrams, said "the 8th Group truckers who were ambushed near Pleiku on 24 November 1967, were a bunch of frustrated tankers". There is no higher compliment that an ex-tanker commander could pay another soldier.

4. I congratulate each of you for your contribution towards the laudatory remarks made by Generals Westmoreland and Abrams.

TEL: PT 775

/s/ Joe O. Bellino
/t/ JOE O. BELLINO
Colonel, TC
Commanding

"A TRUE COPY"


MANUEL J. ASENSIO JR
LTC. INF

HEADQUARTERS
1ST BATTALION, 5TH CAVALRY
1ST CAVALRY DIVISION (AIRMOBILE)
APO San Francisco, California 96490

AVDAIA

6 December 1967

SUBJECT: Letter of Commendation

THRU: Commanding Officer
54th Transportation Battalion
APO 96238

TO: Commanding Officer
669th Transportation Company
APO 96238

1. I wish to take this opportunity to commend the officers and men of the convoy from your unit that was ambushed 4 December 1967, west of AN KHE on highway 19.

2. The ambush was sprung by an estimated company size unit of NVA. Immediately after the lead vehicle was fired upon, the men at the head of the convoy returned determined and accurate suppressive fire at the enemy. Five minutes later the enemy made a strike near the center of the convoy with a charging assault. Alert and prepared to defend and protect the convoy, the men in this area met the NVA with a heavy volume of fire which broke up the assault. Still a third assault occurred three minutes later that too was repulsed because of the determination and bravery of each individual to stand and fight.

3. To each phase of the ambush a timely, courageous and forceful reaction was taken. The men displayed a coolness under fire equal to that of seasoned combat soldiers and their quick reactions precluded serious losses to the unit.

4. Again, I wish to commend all the men in the convoy for a professional job well done.

/s/ Robert L Runkle
/t/ ROBERT L RUNKLE
LTC, Infantry
Commanding

"A TRUE COPY"


MANUEL J. ASENSIO, JR.
LTC, INF

LIST OF INDIVIDUAL AWARDS CON'T

PURPLE HEART

<u>NAME/RANK</u>	<u>STATUS</u>
SP4 HILL, JAMES L	AWARDED
SP4 HOPSON, JOHN R	PENDING
SP4 HUNT, DOUGLAS R	PENDING
SP4 INGRAM, BILLIE R	AWARDED
SP4 LOGSDON, BOB L	AWARDED
SP4 MACE, ROBERT D	AWARDED
SP4 MAPLES, HAROLD R	AWARDED
SP4 METCALF, CHARLES E	AWARDED
SP4 MILLHOFER, FREDERICK	AWARDED
SP4 MONDAY, CLAY R	AWARDED
SP4 NILAND, DANIEL T	PENDING
SP4 OSBORN, JAMES R	AWARDED
SP4 PINTO, CARMEN	AWARDED
SP4 POLLOCK, KENNETH	AWARDED
SP4 PRICKETT, JOHN J	AWARDED
SP4 PRINGLE, FRED H	AWARDED
SP4 RAKES, LARRY	AWARDED
SP4 SANDERS, ROY A	AWARDED
SP4 SNYDER, RONALD L	AWARDED
SP4 STAHLIN, KENNETH R	AWARDED
SP4 STEPHENS, WILLIE	AWARDED
SP4 STEVENSON, JERRY J	AWARDED
SP4 TILLOTSON, RUSSEL A JR	AWARDED
SP4 TURNER, JAMES A	AWARDED
SP4 VAN HORN, GARY R	PENDING
SP4 VAUGHT, ROBERT C	AWARDED
SP4 VAUGHN, LINWOOD C	AWARDED
SP4 WILHELM, HERBERT	PENDING
SP4 WOOD, STEPHEN P	PENDING
SP4 WRIGHT, JAMES R	AWARDED
PFC BENHAYON, RICHARD	PENDING
PFC BRAGG, JAMES M	PENDING
PFC CAPPS, JAMES E JR	AWARDED
PFC COLLINS, ALFRED E	AWARDED
PFC CUMMINGS, HAROLD W JR	AWARDED
PFC DAVIDSON, LEROY F	PENDING
PFC EDWARDS, HERMAN JR	AWARDED
PFC GORDON, RAY E	AWARDED
PFC GREENSAGE, ROY L	AWARDED
PFC HALFORD, EDWARD G	AWARDED
PFC HARNED, DONALD E	AWARDED
PFC HOWLOTT, JOHN R	PENDING
PFC HUGHEY, LLOYD R	AWARDED
PFC HYATT, GERALD T	AWARDED
PFC KENT, LYNN W	AWARDED
PFC LAVELL, JOHN E	AWARDED
PFC MADDOX, TERRANCE N	AWARDED

LIST OF INDIVIDUAL AWARDS CONT

PURPLE HEART

NAME/RANK

STATUS

PFC PETRIK, JOHN J
PFC PORTER, JOE M
PFC REINHARDT, ARTHUR
PFC SAS, ROBERT
PFC SIMMONS, RONALD W
PFC SLACK, RANDY C
PFC STEBNER, ROBERT L
PFC STOUT, GEORGE D
PFC TAYLOR, HARRY T
PFC WASHINGTON, LARRY
PFC WILCHER, JERRY A
PVT BOYD, JAMES A
PVT FOWLKE, ERNEST W
PVT GENOVERSA, ROBERT

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 8TH TRANSPORTATION GROUP (MOTOR TRANSPORT)
APO 96238

AVCA QN-TG-3

3 September 1967

SUBJECT: Synopsis of Ambush

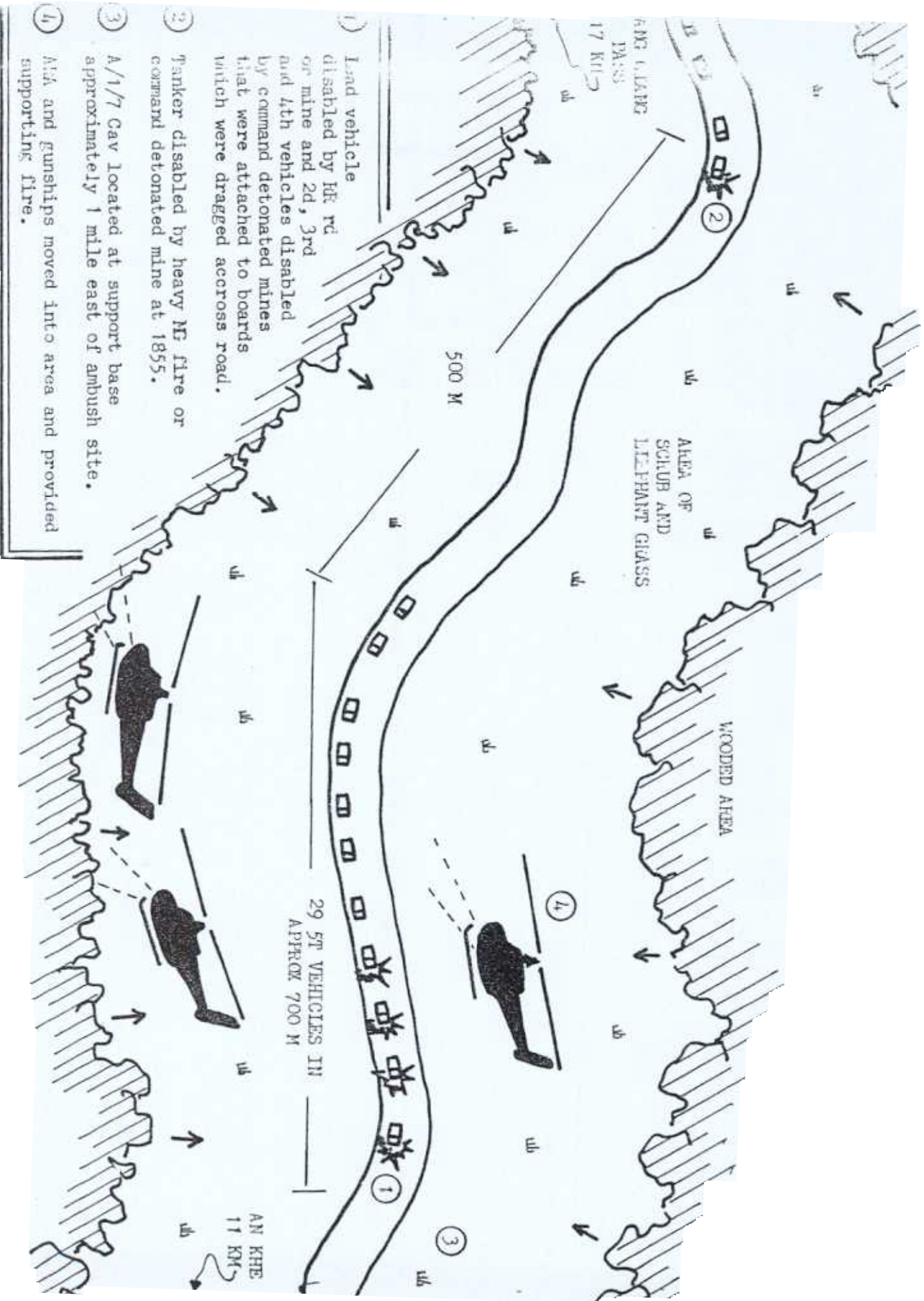
Commanding General
US Army Support Command, Qui Nhon
APO 96238

On 2 September 1967, an 8th Transportation Group convoy under the control of the 54th Transportation Battalion, departed Pleiku on Route 19 for a return trip to Qui Nhon, at approximately 1610 hours. The convoy consisted of 37 task vehicles and 2 jeeps armed with M-60 machine guns. Because of mechanical troubles, a 5,000 gallon tanker which joined the convoy caused a split in the convoy of some 500 meters. At approximately 1855 hours, the lead $\frac{1}{2}$ ton vehicle was struck with a 57MM recoilless rifle round (vic BR 348454) killing one man and wounding two others. Simultaneously, a secondary ambush was sprung at BR 339460 on the second element of the convoy. The enemy force, estimated at a reinforced company, used command detonated mines, recoilless rifles, automatic weapons, and small arms against the convoy. The main ambush was conducted over a 700 meter kill zone with the secondary attack providing a blocking action. The enemy force was situated on the south side of the road, although some gun placements were located in the north. Because of the intensity of the fire and perfect execution of the ambush, little fire was returned by friendly personnel caught in the killing zone. Tactical Security elements arrived within 10-15 minutes. Spooky arrived at 2020 hours. The convoy suffered 7 KIA, 17 WIA and 30 vehicles damaged/destroyed. Enemy casualties and unit designation are unknown.

/s/ Joe O. Bellino
/t/ JOE O. BELLINO
Colonel, TC
Commanding

"A TRUE COPY"


JOHN M. ARBUTHNOT, II



AVCA QN-TG (11 November 1967)
SUBJECT: After-Action Report

1st Ind

HEADQUARTERS, 8TH TRANSPORTATION GROUP (Motor Transport), Qui Nhon
APO 96238 13 November 1967

TO: Commanding General, US Army Support Command, Qui Nhon, APO 96238

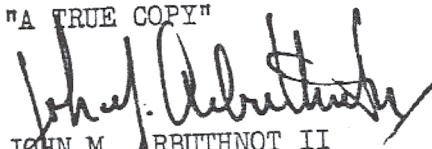
1. After-action report by the convoy commander and pictures of the two vehicles damaged are furnished for your convenience.

2. The good fortune of having the single armored task vehicle in the convoy being the only vehicle in the kill-zone accounts primarily for the minimum damage to equipment and fact that no one was injured. However, it is heartening to know that all the members of the convoy followed their instructions for defense against highway ambushes.

3. Convoy defense procedures will continue to receive command emphasis at all echelons within the 8th Transportation Group.

/s/ Joe O. Bellino
/t/ JOE O. BELLINO
Colonel, TC
Commanding

"A TRUE COPY"


JOHN M. ARBUTHNOT II
1LT, TC

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
585TH TRANSPORTATION COMPANY (MEDIUM TRUCK CARGO)
APO 96238

11 November 1967

SUBJECT: After-action Report

THRU: Commanding Officer
27th Trans Bn (Trk)
APO 96238

TO: Commanding Officer
8th Trans Gp (MT)
APO 96238

1. On Saturday, 11 November 1967, at approximately 1515 hours, two miles west of 1st Cav checkpoint 89, the first march unit of the convoy which I was commanding was taken under ambush fire by an estimated 10 to 15 enemy.

2. Fire consisted of two or three land mines and approximately 100 rounds of small arms (automatic and semi-automatic weapons) fire coming from the right hand side of the road, that is, South to North.

3. The firing lasted for approximately 30 seconds; the land mines fired first followed by rapid small arms fire. It was noticed while driving through the kill zone that the mines which were detonated were on the side of the road and in no way could have damaged a vehicle.

4. There were no casualties and only minor damage to one convoy vehicle which belonged to the 585th Transportation Company. This damage was caused by the impact of five bullets in the vehicle's radiator, one in its right front tire, and another against the armor plating on the right side of the vehicle on the door. The armor plating probably saved the driver from being struck by the bullet.

5. As soon as the firing began, the 1st Cav security frequency was used. Three gun ships were on the scene within five minutes. The 1st Cav troops arrived in ten minutes to sweep the ambush site. An undetermined number of enemy were taken under fire by these troops as they entered the wooded area off of the road.

11 November 1967

SUBJECT: After-action Report

6. During the attack the convoy drivers acted correctly by driving on through the area. The attack was concentrated on the last few vehicles of the march unit. The convoy regrouped near Check Point 89 and proceeded to Qui Nhon without further incident. The damaged vehicle was taken to An Khe where it remained overnight.

/s/ Phillip T. Hall, Jr
/t/ PHILLIP T. HALL, JR
CPT, TC
Commanding

"A TRUE COPY"


JOHN M. ARBUTHNOT, II
1LT, TC

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 8TH TRANSPORTATION GROUP (MOTOR TRANSPORT
APO 96238

AVCA QN-TG

25 November 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR: Commanding General, US Army Support Command, Qui Nhon
SUBJECT: Reconstruction of Ambush

At 1005 hours, 24 November 1967, a convoy going to Pleiku from the 54th Transportation Battalion was ambushed by an NVA force at grid coordinates AR 965465. This convoy consisted of 43 - 5 ton cargo trucks, 15 2½ ton cargo trucks, 6 - gun trucks, 3 gun jeeps and 1 maintenance truck. The following account of what happened is submitted based on telephonic reports from Pleiku. The ambush began when the lead gun truck in the convoy was stopped by small arms fire and simultaneously the lead cargo vehicle was hit by a command detonated mine. This truck was stopped along the right side of the road. The convoy tried to run through the ambush, per 8th Group SOP, but only one truck was successful in breaking out of the 300 meter kill zone. The remaining trucks that tried to break out were stopped by mines or small arms fire, effectively blocking the road. One of the trucks, carrying ammo, was hit and exploded, destroying a gun truck of the second serial that was behind it. The gun truck of the third serial was hit by small arms fire and stopped. The gun truck of the fourth serial was hit by a grenade, but this grenade did not penetrate the armor plating. The 5th and 6th gun trucks were not hit, but immediately returned fire as did all drivers once they were stopped. A machine gunner in the 5th gun truck killed an NVA machine gunner before he could fire on the convoy from a distance of only 10 feet from the road.

The results of this ambush are as follows:

- a. Friendly: 2 KIA and 17 WIA with one of these in critical condition
- b. Enemy: 41 KIA and 4 WIA (POW's), of this figure the convoy accounted for 19 KIA and 3 WIA prior to the arrival of the security forces
- c. Vehicle Damage: 14 trucks (4 of these were gun trucks) 6 to 9 of these were destroyed.

The security forces at CP 91W reacted within a few minutes to a call of "contact" made by the convoy commander, Lt Purvis, and to the sound of the ambush which they could hear. When they arrived at ambush site, they conducted a major sweep and pursuit to account for final enemy casualties.

AVCA QN-TG

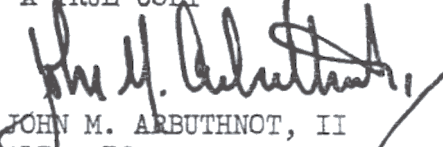
25 November 1967

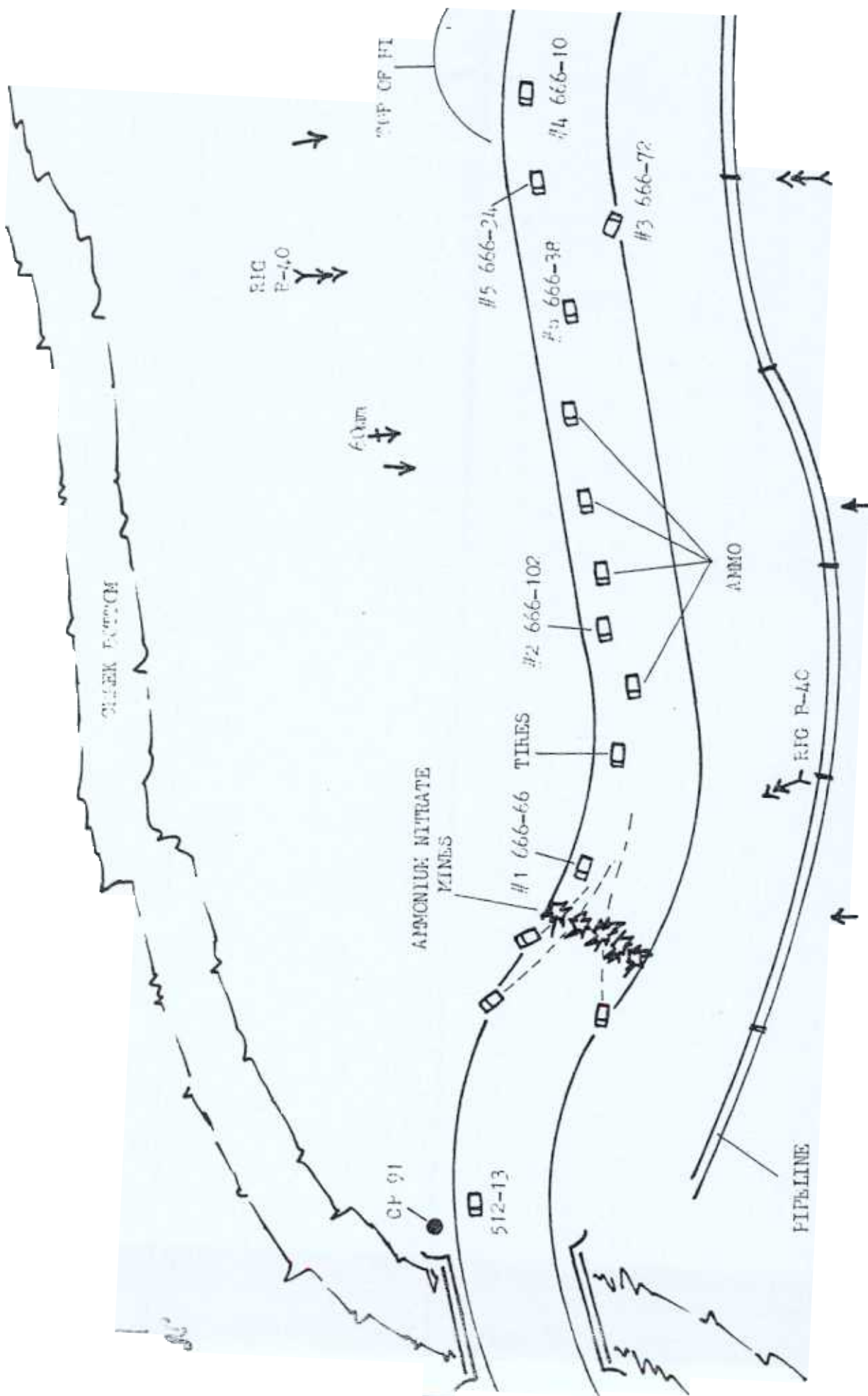
SUBJECT: Reconstruction of Ambush

A more detailed account, complete with statements of witnesses will be presented as soon as investigating officers from this headquarters return from Pleiku.

/s/ Joe O. Bellino
/t/ JOE O. BELLINO
Colonel, TC
Commanding

"A TRUE COPY"


JOHN M. ARBUTHNOT, II
1LT, TC



OF COOL
COOL UP
COOL UP

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

HEADQUARTERS, 8TH TRANSPORTATION GROUP (MOTOR TRANSPORT)

AFC 96238

MEMORANDUM FOR: Commanding General, US Army Support Command, Qui Thon

SUBJECT: Reconstruction of Ambush of 4 December 1967

At 0815 hours, 4 December 1967, a convoy going to Pleiku from the 54th Transportation Battalion, was ambushed by a Viet Cong unit estimated at company size (three 20-30 man platoons) at grid coordinates BR 330460. This convoy consisted of 58-5 ton cargo trucks, 11-2½ ton cargo trucks, 6 gun trucks (armor plated), 4 gun jeeps and 1 maintenance truck. The ambush began when a charge was detonated at the side of the road. The lead gun truck driver noticed a board with three mines pulled across the road in front of him. He stopped his vehicle and at that moment the vehicle was hit by small arms fire and a recoilless rocket, killing the driver. The lead jeep (second vehicle in convoy) also received small arms fire and was stopped. Both vehicles immediately began returning fire, utilizing the two (2) M-60 machine guns and M-79 grenade launcher in the truck and the M-60 machine gun in the jeep. Four other vehicles received flat tires and body damage. Personnel began returning fire under the leadership of 1LT Todd, the march unit commander (second vehicle in the convoy). Gun trucks of the march units moved forward into the approximately 3000 meter long kill zone, and subsequently one of these was hit by rocket fire wounding three gunners. The leadership and firepower of the convoy was immediate and responsive enough to account for all enemy KIAs and WIA prior to arrival of the reaction force. At the time of the ambush, 0815 hours, a call of "ambush! ambush! ambush!" went out over the radio from the convoy. The reported time of arrival of the gun ships was 0827, twelve minutes after start of the ambush; a reaction force formed at an artillery base camp and brought in by the Group Commander, arrived at approximately 0830. The quick reaction time of the convoy personnel and the intense base of fire put up by the machine gunners in the gun trucks broke the enemy ambush prior to the arrival of any of the reaction forces. From the point of view of the convoy, the reaction time of the combat supporting forces was too slow. The reaction time of 12 minutes for gun ship support is marginal; the reaction time of 15 minutes for the first ground troops (considering that they were motivated by convoy control personnel) is excessive, and 25 minutes after the call "ambush! ambush! ambush!" was given is too long to wait for air lifted support.

The results of this ambush are as follows:

- a. Friendly 1 KIA and 6 WIA (2 very slight)
- b. Enemy 13 KIA and 1 WIA (POW)
- c. Vehicles damaged gun truck destroyed, 1 gun jeep and
three trucks slightly damaged.

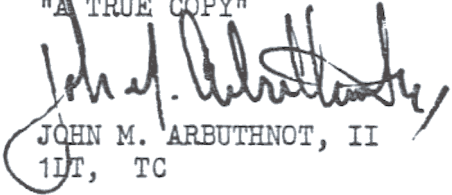
From reports taken at the scene, the apparent plan of the Viet Cong was to stop the convoy, kill the personnel, then destroy the vehicles with satchel charges. Seven satchel charges were found on Viet Cong bodies by EOD teams and disarmed. The quick reaction and firepower of this convoy are the only factors that prevented this ambush from being a success.






A more detailed account, complete with statements of witnesses will be presented as soon as investigating officer from this headquarters returns from Pleiku.

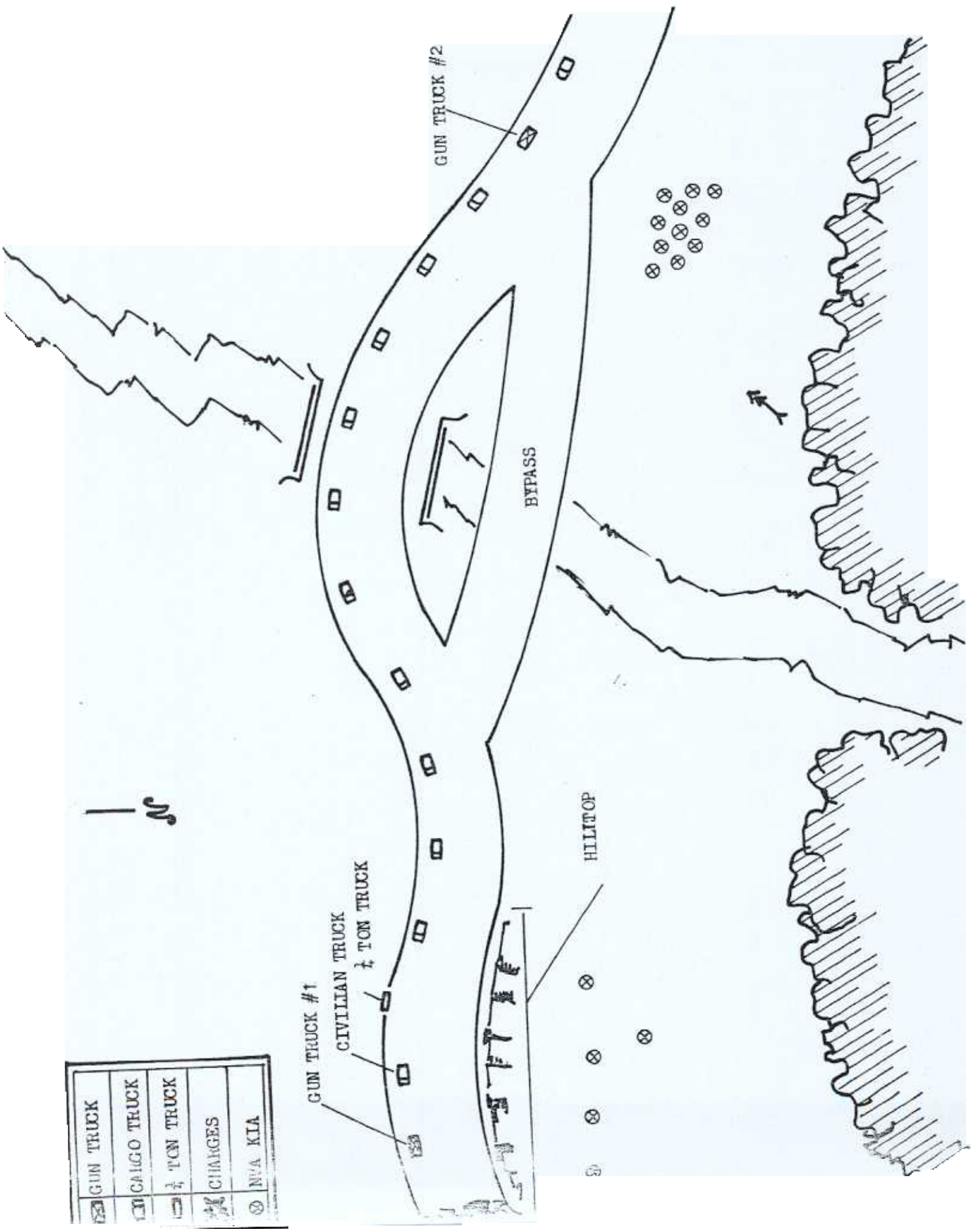
TEL: PT 775

/s/ Joe O. Bellino
/t/ JOE O. BELLINO
Colonel, TC
Commanding

"A TRUE COPY"


JOHN M. ARBUTHNOT, II
1LT, TC

	GUN TRUCK
	CARGO TRUCK
	1/2 TON TRUCK
	CHARGES
	NVA KIA



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 8TH TRANSPORTATION GROUP (MOTOR TRANSPORT)
APO 96238

AVCA QN-TG-3

23 January 1968

SUBJECT: Synopsis of Convoy Incident

TO: Commanding General
US Army Support Command, Qui Nhon
APO 96238

At approximately 210615 January 68, an 8th Transportation Group convoy under the control of the 54th Transportation Battalion consisting of 4 gun trucks, 4 gun jeeps and 60 task vehicles departed Qui Nhon for Pleiku. The convoy was halted at CP 96 east for thirty (30) minutes while the road was cleared. At 1000 hours approximately 500 yards east of CP 102, the lead element of the convoy came upon a 5 ton tractor which was attempting to hook up to a POL trailer. Because this operation was blocking the flow of traffic, the convoy commander moved to the front and directed the clearance of the road. He then directed his convoy to continue. At this time, a large volume of automatic and small arms fire was received from the south side of the road. Convoy security personnel immediately returned fire in the direction of the hostile fire. The convoy continued to move through the area. Within 5-10 minutes APC's from the road security element at CP 102 arrived and engaged the hostile element followed by tanks from CP 98 within 10 minutes. Rear elements of the convoy approaching the area received approximately 40-50 rounds of automatic fire. Both APCs and tanks at the site of the incident fired in the direction of the hostile fire. Number of enemy involved, KIA, WIA or unit designation unknown. No hostile explosive ordnance was involved.

TEL: PT 779/786

/s/ Joe O. Bellino
/t/ JOE O. BELLINO
Colonel, TC
Commanding

"A TRUE COPY"


MANUEL J. ASENSIO, JR.
LTC, INF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 8TH TRANSPORTATION GROUP (MOTOR TRANSPORT)
APO 96238

AVCA QH-TG

27 January 1968

SUBJECT: Synopsis of Convoy Ambush

TO: Commanding General
US Army Support Command, Qui Nhon
APO 96238

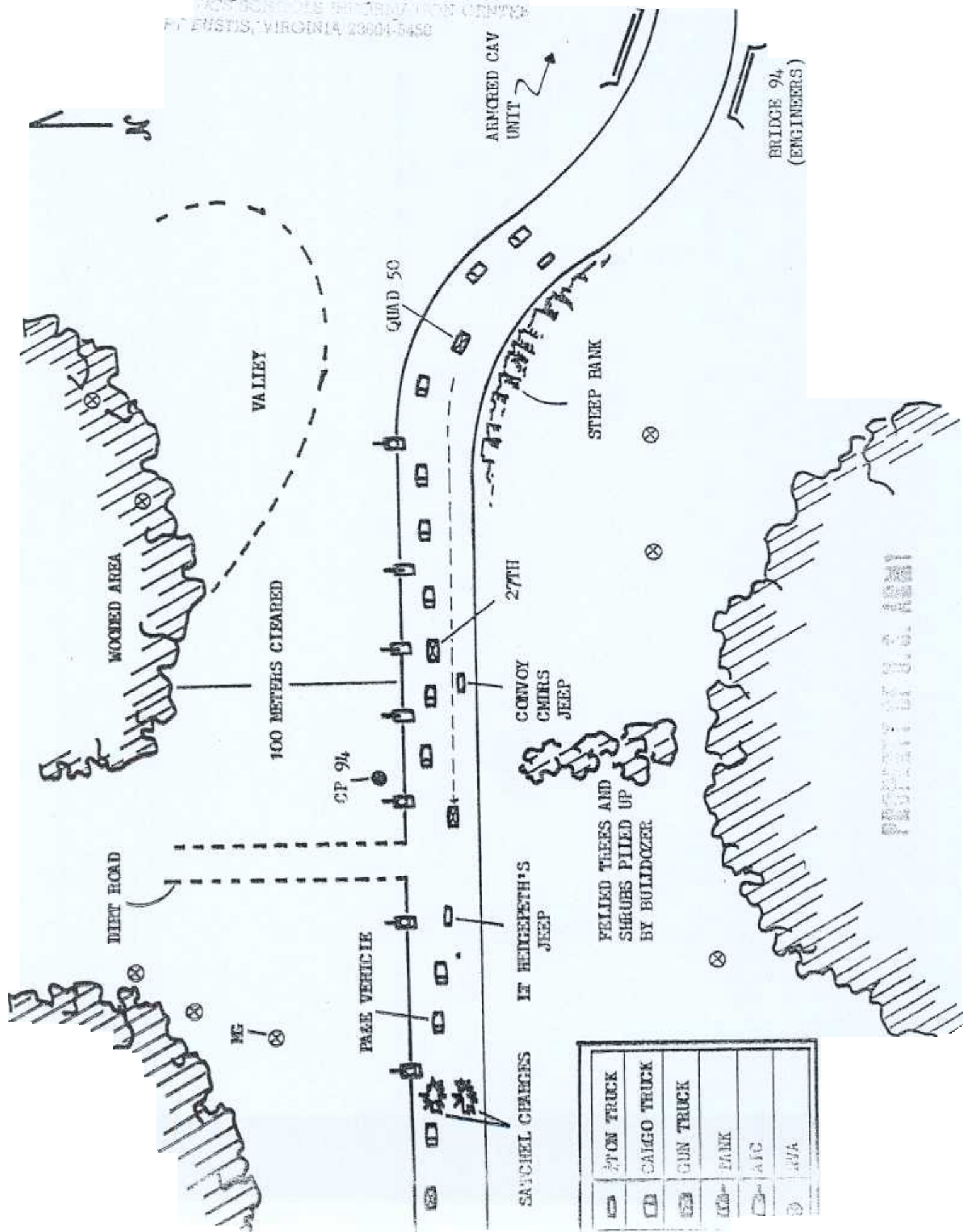
At 0600 hours 25 January 1968, a 54th Transportation Battalion 8th Transportation Group (MT) convoy, consisting of ninety-five vehicles for Pleiku and twenty-three for An Khe, departed the unit marshalling area located on route 19, Cha Rang Valley, Qui Nhon. The ninety-five vehicles for Pleiku consisted of sixty-five 5-ton cargo trucks; nineteen 2½-ton cargo trucks; five armored 2½-ton trucks; four radio jeeps and two 5-ton maintenance trucks. At approximately 1015 hours, the convoy received automatic and small arms fire from both sides of the road at BR 089552. The gun trucks and convoy personnel returned fire and within 10 minutes elements of the 2/1 Cavalry were on the site with armored personnel carriers and tanks. After all firing stopped the convoy proceeded west for approximately five hundred yards when enemy fire was again received from both sides of the road. The NVA opened fire on the second and third vehicles in the convoy. The enemy fire consisted of rockets, heavy machine guns, grenades and small arms from both sides of the road. A machine gun position was later discovered approximately twenty-five yards on the right side of the road. The reaction force arrived on the scene from the previous ambush site immediately. The ground distance covered by the ambush was approximately one thousand meters from BR 089552 to BR 080550. Approximately sixty convoy personnel were involved in the ambush, plus the reaction force. The number of hostile personnel involved is unknown. Two US drivers were killed and one driver was wounded. One 2½-ton gun truck and one 2½-ton cargo truck were damaged, with minor damage to the cargo. One civilian tractor from the Pacific Architects and Engineers was destroyed. Three armed helicopters arrived at approximately 1045 hours. Two Medical Evacuation Helicopters arrived within ten minutes after request. Two officers, members of an engineer team, were wounded, one fatally, while clearing explosive ordnance from the site.

TEL: PT 775

/s/ Joe O. Bellino
/t/ JOE O. BELLINO
Colonel, TC
Commanding

"A TRUE COPY"

JOHN M. ARBUTHNOT, II
1ST TC



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 8TH TRANSPORTATION GROUP (MOTOR TRANSP)
APO 96238

AVCA QN-TG-3

1 February

SUBJECT: Synopsis of Ambush

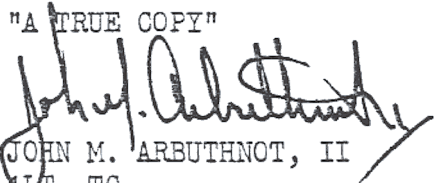
TO: Commanding General
US Army Support Command, Qui Nhon
APO 96238

On 30 January 1968, an 8th Transportation Group convoy under the control of the 54th Transportation Battalion departed Qui Nhon at approximately 0600 hours for Pleiku. The convoy consisted of 80 task vehicles, 7 gun trucks, 8 gun jeeps and 3 quad fifties. Upon arrival in An Khe, the convoy was joined by 3 APC's and 1 tank from the security force of the 173d Airborne Brigade. The additional security element was dispersed toward the front of the convoy. At approximately 1000 hours, the convoy had reached CP 102 (vic BR 253483). Since the convoy was about to pass out of the area of operation (AO) of the 173d Airborne Brigade the additional security element pulled out of the convoy and stopped at CP 102. Approximately one mile west of CP 102, the convoy came under fire initially by mortars and followed by small arms and automatic weapons. The convoy personnel immediately returned heavy fire. In addition, the 173d security element advanced from CP 102 and an element from the 4th Div security element moved from the west to engage the hostile force. Air strikes by F111A's, F104's and gun ships were made. Two US personnel were slightly injured. One five ton tractor and reefer were damaged. Enemy KIA, WIA or unit designation are unknown. It is estimated that the enemy force was of platoon size. After the road was cleared by EOD, the convoy proceeded approximately 35 meters. Once again, they received mortar fire. The convoy continued moving. No damage or casualties resulted from the second incident. Air strikes again were made against the suspected enemy position.

TEL: PT 786

/s/ Joe O. Bellino
/t/ JOE O. BELLINO
Colonel, TC
Commanding

"A TRUE COPY"


JOHN M. ARBUTHNOT, II
LT, TC

CONVOY AMBUSH ON QL 19

1. PURPOSE: To review actions taken by convoy personnel of the 124th Transportation Battalion (Truck) when ambushed on QL 19 west of An Khe on 31 January 1968.

2. BACKGROUND: Lt Wilson's convoy departed An Khe at 1430 hours for Pleiku. The convoy consisted of twenty-four 5 ton tractors with trailers, two radio equipped gun jeeps, and three 2½ ton gun trucks from the 124th Transportation Battalion (Truck). An element of the 54th Transportation Battalion (Truck) consisting of seven 5 ton cargo trucks, with a lead 2½ ton gun truck and a trail radio equipped gun jeep located at the rear of the convoy. Moreover, two quad 50 caliber gun trucks were attached from "B" Battery 4/60 Artillery for convoy security. The convoy consisted of: four 5,000 gallon tankers; two class II & IV loads; five class IV loads; and eight class V loads. The seven trucks from the 54th Transportation Battalion (Truck) were loaded with Engineer IV.

3. AMBUSH: The incident occurred at 1520 hours, 31 January 1968, as the middle of the convoy approached grid coordinated BR 252483 heading west. The weather was partly cloudy but bright. Visibility was good. The terrain at the ambush site, the base of the Mang Giang Pass, is cleared approximately 100 meters on each side of the road and the grade is starting to increase as the base of the pass is reached. The lead elements of the convoy were starting up the pass when mortar rounds started hitting in close proximity of the center of the column. The enemy was not adjacent to the road, but was positioned halfway up the Mang Giang Pass and located within the woodland. The lead elements of the convoy and the convoy commander had passed through the approximately 400 yard kill zone. Lt Wilson, the Convoy Commander, was located at the front of the convoy when the firing started. Upon hearing the firing he immediately turned around and proceeded back to make an estimate of the situation and to facilitate movement of the convoy through the kill zone. After reaching the end of the kill zone, Lt Wilson turned around again and started back toward the pass. He had traveled 50 meters when his jeep received a direct hit by a mortar and burst into flames. The jeep then went off the road into a ditch and continued to burn. Lt Wilson was killed instantly. SP4 Fowlke, the machine gunner, was seriously injured and SP4 Brammer was slightly injured. The lead gun truck continued to escort the head of the column to the top of the Mang Giang Pass and then returned to aid the remainder of the convoy through the kill zone. The gun truck positioned itself at the edge of the kill zone approximately 100 meters east of the pass. To obtain a better field of fire and provide maximum coverage to those vehicles remaining within the kill zone, the second gun truck repositioned itself in proximity of the lead gun truck, a distance of approximately 50 meters apart. The rear gun truck proceeded up to where Lt Wilson's jeep was on fire, stopped and returned fire until instructed by the military police to move forward. SP5 Jackson and SP4 Green sustained slight injury while in the rear of the gun truck.

The exact location of the attached quad 50 gun trucks could not be determined. Interview of drivers and supervisory personnel indicated that the quad 50 gun trucks were positioned near the center of the convoy. Available information indicates that the quad 50's continued through the kill zone with only one returning fire.

The exact size and density of the enemy unit conducting the ambush is not known. The enemy was positioned about halfway up the pass and used automatic weapons, small arms fire, and mortar rounds against the convoy.

The 4th Infantry Division's Security Force, 1/2 Cavalry Squadron classified this incident as a sporadic mortar attack instead of an ambush.

4. ACTIONS OF INDIVIDUAL TRUCK DRIVERS: The drivers reacted to the ambush in an appropriate manner by keeping their vehicles moving through the kill zone. The gun trucks of the 124th Transportation Battalion (Truck), which were out of the kill zone when the firing started, returned to aid the vehicles in the convoy. After escorting the head of the column to the top of Mang Giang Pass to a relatively secured area, the lead gun truck returned to aid the remainder of the convoy and positioned itself at the edge of the kill zone approximately 100 meters east of the pass. To obtain a better field of fire and provide maximum coverage to those vehicles remaining within the kill zone, the second gun truck repositioned itself in proximity of the lead gun truck, a distance of approximately 50 meters apart. A third gun truck located in the rear of the convoy was stopped by the security force at CP 102. The driver, SP5 Jackson, dismounted to see what was going on. At that time the rear gun jeep came up carrying SGT Welch, PFC Tidwell and PFC Cansans. PFC Tidwell informed the security force that their convoy was being ambushed and needed their assistance immediately. PFC Tidwell promptly jumped into the gun truck and proceeded to the ambush site. SP5 Jackson, the regular driver, jumped into the back of the gun truck. Upon reaching the location where Lt Wilson's jeep was burning, PFC Tidwell stopped, climbed into the back of the gun truck and assumed the position of a machine gunner. The gun truck crew remained at the location directing fire until instructed by the military police to move. The exact location of the attached quad 50 gun trucks could not be determined. Interview of drivers and supervisory personnel indicated that the quad 50 gun trucks were positioned near the center of the convoy. It is believed that the Quad 50 gun trucks continued through the kill zone with only one of them returning fire. SGT Sikes stated that one of the Quad 50's passed him going up the pass and continued passing other vehicles within the column. SP4 Howell and SP4 Bushong, both machine gunners in the lead gun truck, which was proceeding down the pass to the edge of the kill zone, saw the quad 50 gun trucks coming up the pass together.

5. ROAD SECURITY FORCE: When the ambush started there were two APC's and one tank in the immediate area. Helicopter support was in the area approximately twenty minutes later.

6. GENERAL COMMENTS ON THE AMBUSH: The enemy used small arms, au-

tomatic weapons, 60mm and 82mm mortars. Only one vehicle was damaged and resulted from a direct mortar hit. The vehicle was a jeep and was moving at the time.

7. PROBLEM AREA AND LESSONS LEARNED

a. ITEM: Utilization of mortars in an ambush.

b. DISCUSSION: This is the first situation where the enemy has used mortars against a convoy from this battalion. Quick reaction is required of all individuals in determining the type of attack and the limits of the kill zone. When small arms fire is combined with a mortar attack the driver must do more than return a heavy volume of fire. Personnel must get out of the kill zone, preferably, and/or obtain overhead cover. Air cover should be immediately available to locate the mortar positions and then silence these positions or request artillery support. It is highly desirable for the aircraft to provide continuous overhead cover for the convoy and not just be on call. The five or ten minutes lost waiting for the aircraft to arrive often means the difference between a few casualties or a large number and minor or major damage to vehicles and equipment.

c. OBSERVATION: Since an ambush is generally of limited duration, drivers must be constantly alert and capable of reacting instantly with a heavy volume of effective fire when fired upon. Simultaneously the personnel must move quickly through the kill zone and direct maximum fire at the most logical vantage points. The convoy commander must immediately identify his location, notify the road security forces, request air and/or artillery support and proceed to facilitate movement of his convoy through the kill zone.

"TRUE COPY"


JOHN M. ARBUTHNOT II

1LT, TC

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 8TH TRANSPORTATION GROUP (MOTOR TRANSPORT)
APO 96238

AVCA QN-TG

7 February 1968

SUBJECT: Synopsis of Ambush

Commanding General
US Army Support Command, Qui Nhon
APO 96238

On 7 February 1968, an 8th Group convoy under the control of the 54th Transportation Battalion departed Qui Nhon at approximately 0630 hours for Pleiku. The convoy consisted of 67 task vehicles, 1 maintenance truck, 6 gun trucks and 4 gun jeeps. At approximately 1010 hours, after passing CP 92 West (vic AR 985503), the convoy came under fire from small arms and automatic fire from the tree line south of the road. In addition, two rockets were fired at the convoy from a mound halfway between the road and the tree line. Convoy security personnel immediately opened fire killing two NVA at the rocket position. The enemy force began to move forward from the tree line but were driven back by the fire power of convoy personnel. Gun trucks which cleared the kill zone, which was estimated to be 200 meters, returned to fire upon enemy positions. Within 15 minutes, 6-8 APC's and 2-3 tanks arrived at the scene and began to engage the enemy. Four US personnel were slightly wounded. Enemy casualties were 6 KIA and 1 WIA. The force was estimated at between 50-60 NVA. Unit designation is unknown. One 5 ton cargo vehicle hauling Class V was hit with a rocket and was destroyed. A gas tank of another 5 ton cargo was damaged. Also, several vehicles, including two gun trucks, received flat tires from enemy fire. Mines and satchel charges were not used. Gun ships arrived within 15-20 minutes. No artillery was used.

PT 770/786

/s/ Joe O. Bellino
/t/ JOE O. BELLINO
Colonel, TC
Commanding

"A TRUE COPY"


JOHN M. ARBUTHNOT, II
1st Lt

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 8TH TRANSPORTATION GROUP (MOTOR TRANSPORT)
APO 96238

AVCA QN-TG-3

14 February 1968

SUBJECT: Synopsis of Convoy Incident

Commanding General
US Army Support Command, Qui Nhon
APO 96238

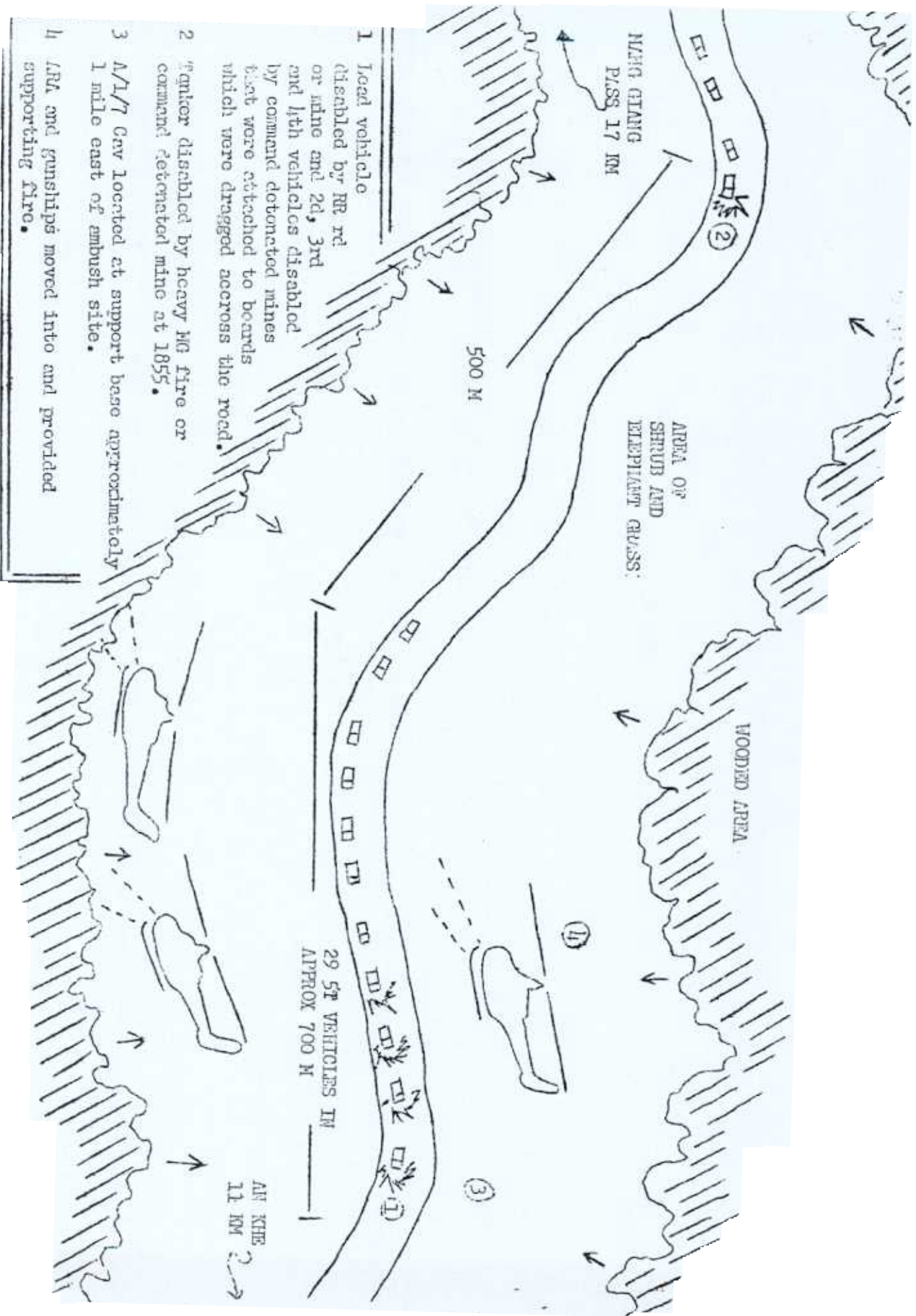
On 13 February 1968, an 8th Transportation Group convoy under the control of the 124th Transportation Battalion departed An Khe, at approximately 1325 hours, for a return trip west on QL 19 to Pleiku. The convoy consisted of 28 task vehicles, 1 maintenance vehicle, 2 gun jeeps, 3 gun trucks, and 3 quad fifties. At approximately 1500 hours, the convoy was 200 meters east of the base of Mang Giang Pass (vic BR 237500) when the front element was brought under fire from mortars and small arms fire. Convoy personnel immediately returned fire in the direction of suspected enemy positions. The convoy commander moved his convoy through the area while directing one of the attached (4/60 Arty) quad fifties accompanying the convoy to provide fire in the direction of the suspected enemy mortar position (vic BT 232495). Tactical security forces from the 173d Airborne Brigade arrived within 10 minutes. Air strikes were also conducted against the suspected mortar position. Upon completion of the air strikes, elements of the 173d Airborne made a sweep of the area. There were no US casualties nor were there any vehicles damaged. Enemy casualties, size or unit designation are unknown. Approximately 7 mortar rounds were fired against the convoy.

PT 786

/s/ Joe O. Bellino
/t/ JOE O. BELLINO
Colonel, TC
Commanding

"A TRUE COPY"


JOHN M. ARBUTHNOT, II
LT, TC



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 8TH TRANSPORTATION GROUP (MOTOR TRANSPORT)
APO 96238

22 February 1968

SUBJECT: Synopsi of Ambush Report

TO:

Commanding General
US Army Support Command, Qui Nhon
APO 96238

On 21 February 1968, an 8th Transportation Group convoy under the control of the 27th Transportation Battalion, departed Qui Nhon at approximately 0715 hours west on highway 19 for Pleiku. The convoy consisted of 54 task vehicles, 4 gun trucks, 4 gun jeeps and a quad fifty. At approximately 0950 hours, between CP 89 and CP 96 (vic BR 348455), the convoy came under fire from B40 rockets, automatic weapons and small arms. Convoy security personnel immediately returned fire in the direction of suspected enemy positions south of the highway.

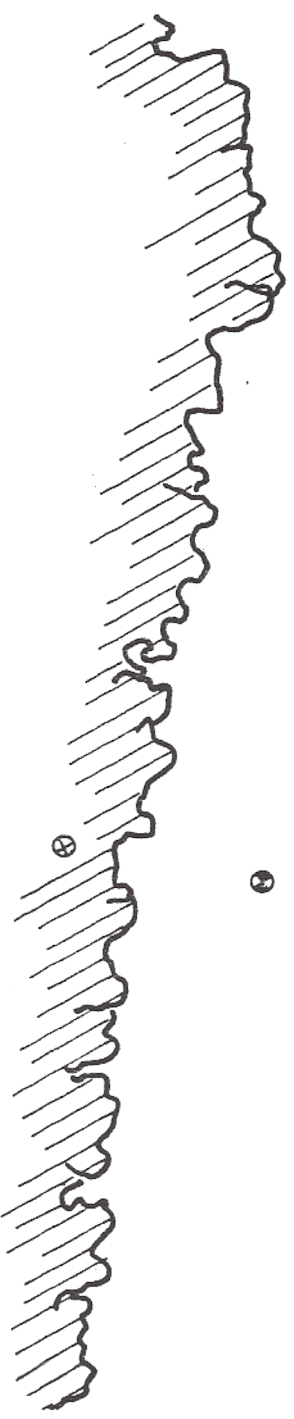
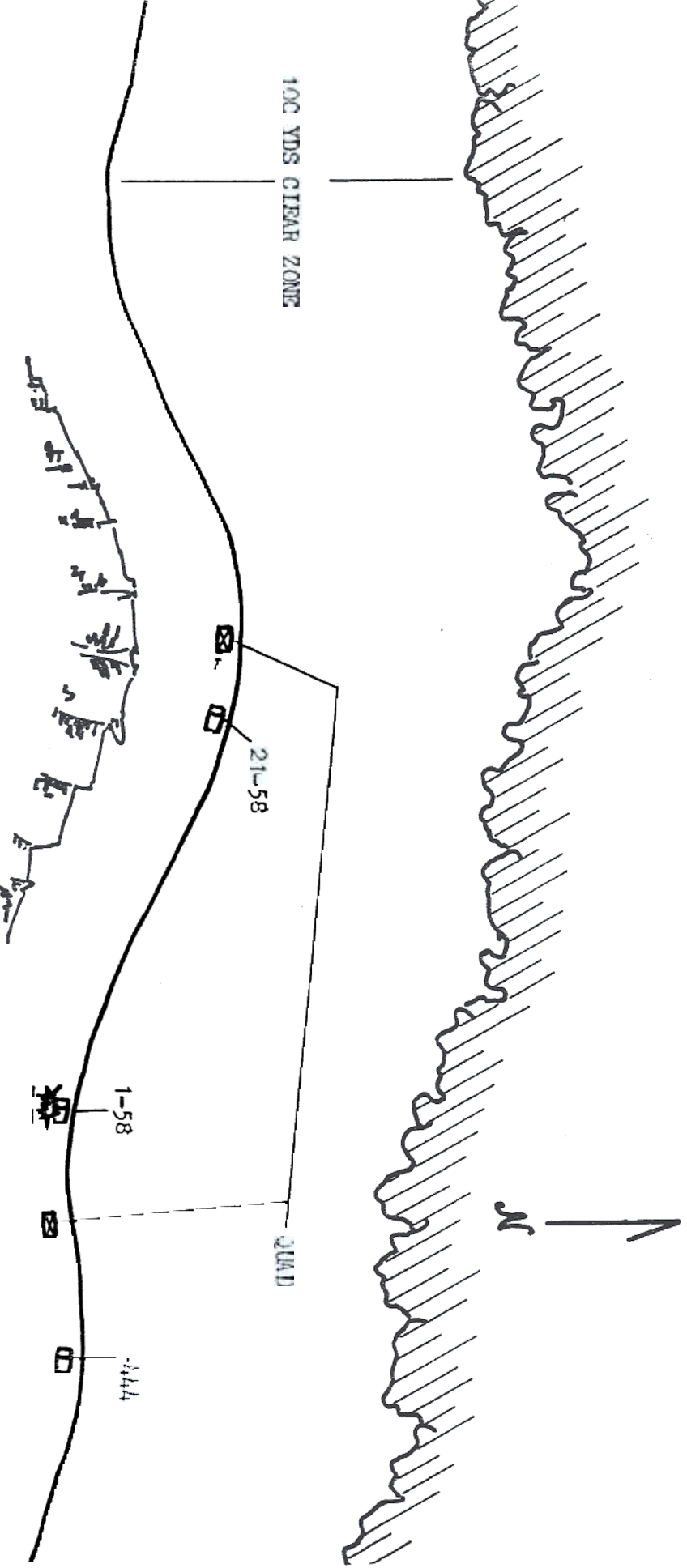
The 27th Transportation Battalion quad fifty moved into the kill zone, which was estimated at approximately 300 meters, and was credited with 1 NVA KIA. APC's from the 173d Airborne Division arrived in support approximately 5-10 minutes and engaged the enemy force. Artillery also was used by the tactical force. Three convoy personnel were slightly wounded. Three vehicles, including the quad fifty gun truck, were damaged, one task vehicle seriously. The enemy force was estimated at 10-12 personnel. Unit designation is unknown. One NVA was KIA and another possibly MIA. No mines were used against the convoy. Foxholes were found in the area of the ambush.

/s/ Joe O. Bellino
/t/ Joe O. Bellino
Colonel, TC
Commanding

TEL: FT 779/786

"A TRUE COPY"
John M. ARBUTHNOT, II
LTJ, TC

23	QUAD 50
20	CARGO TRUCK
3	NVA KIA
2	NVA WIA



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 8TH TRANSPORTATION GROUP (MOTOR TRANSPORT)
APO 96238

AVCA QN-TG-3

6 March 1968

SUBJECT: Synopsis of Ambush

Commanding Officer
US Army Support Command, Qui Nhon
APO 96238

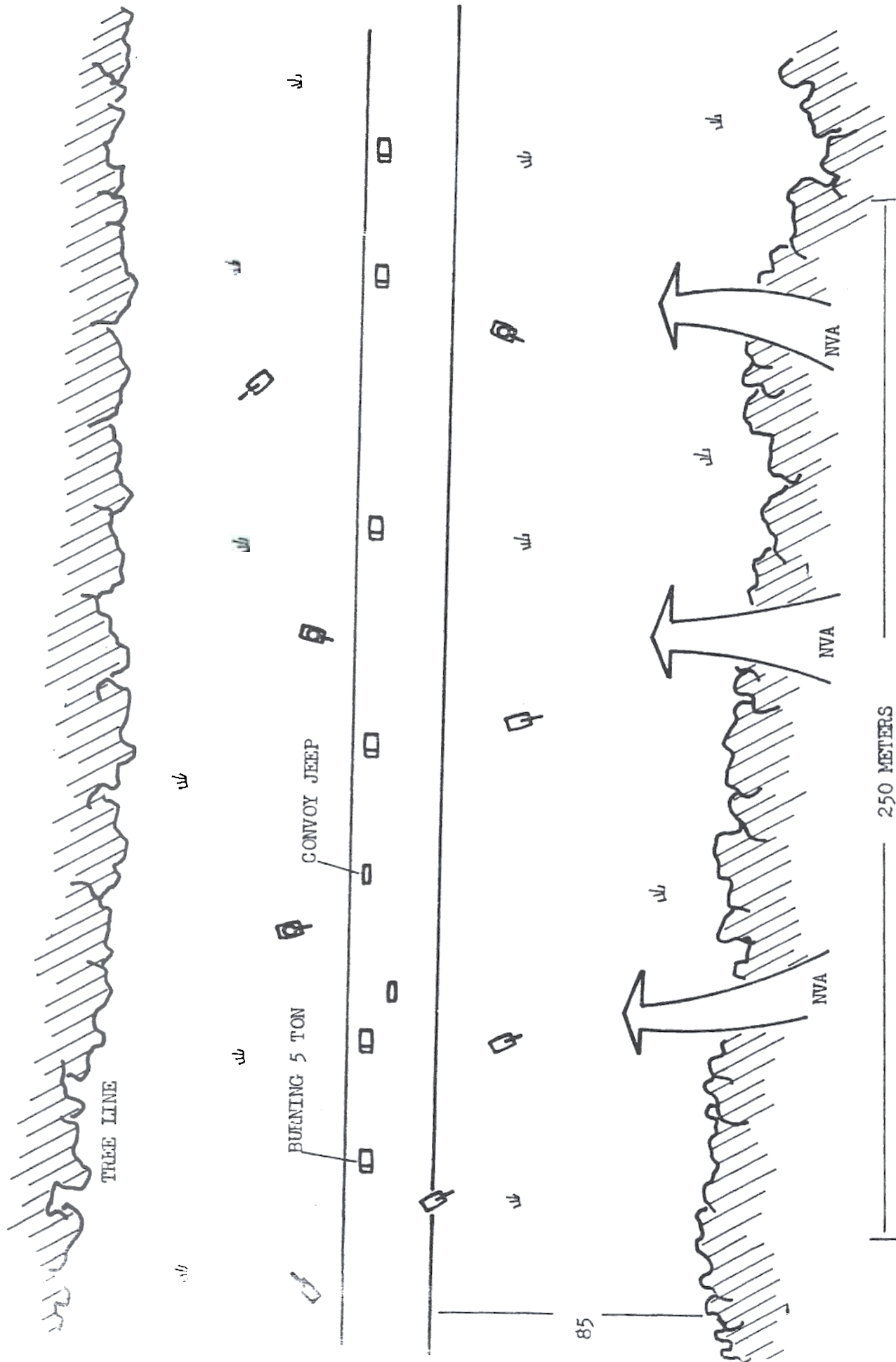
On 4 March 1968, an 8th Transportation Group convoy, under the control of the 54th Transportation Battalion, departed Qui Nhon for Pleiku on highway 19, at approximately 0600 hours. The convoy consisted of 104 task vehicles, 4 gun jeeps and 8 gun trucks. At approximately 0900 hours, the convoy was held up at CP 89 by the tactical security force due to enemy activity in Mang Giang Pass. The convoy was allowed to proceed at approximately 1130 hours escorted by 1 tank and 2 APC's from the 173rd Airborne Brigade. Approximately 1145 hours in the vicinity of BR 333461, the convoy came under fire from mortars and heavy small arms and automatic weapons fire. Convoy security personnel immediately opened fire in the direction of the enemy force which was well entrenched in the tree line on the north side of the road. Sporadic fire was also received from the south side of the road. Two quad 50's from the 4/60 Arty, which were traveling with the convoy, and one from the 27th Transportation Battalion convoy, which was behind the 54th convoy, fired upon the enemy positions throughout the kill zone, estimated to be 500-1000 meters long. A reaction force of one tank, 4 APC's and 4 gun ships arrived within 5 minutes. There were 8 convoy personnel WIA, two of whom were from the 4/60 Arty. One WIA died on 6 March 1968, from the wounds received. Five vehicles and two trailers were damaged. The unit designation of the enemy force, which was estimated at 50 personnel, is unknown. Enemy casualties are unknown. The column remained in place on the highway until 1430 hours at which time, on orders of the military police, it was turned around to An Khe.

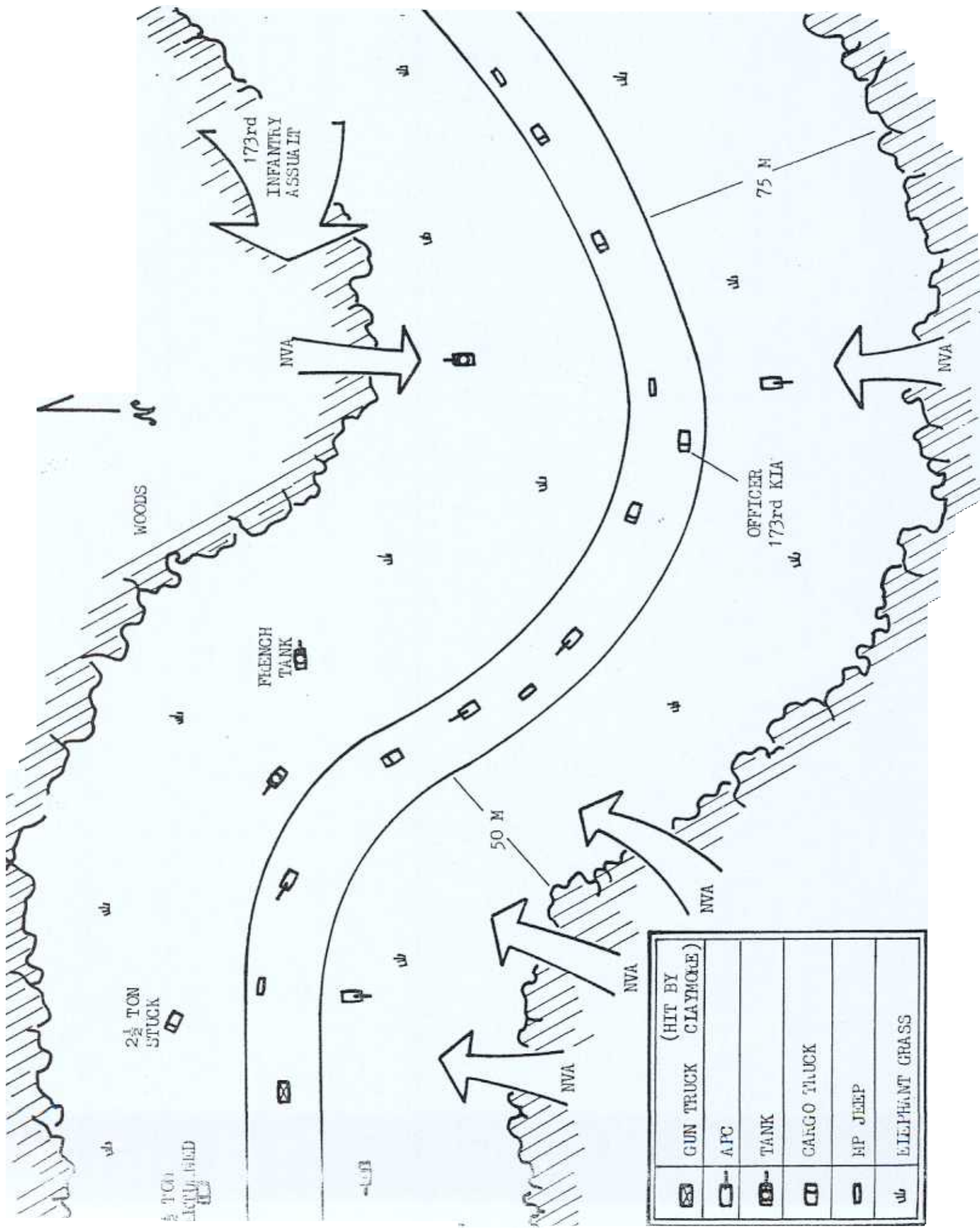
TEL: PT 786/779

/s/ Joe O. Bellino
/t/ JOE O. BELLINO
Colonel, TC
Commanding

"A TRUE COPY"


LTC, INM





DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 8TH TRANSPORTATION GROUP (MOTOR TRANSPORT)
APO 96238

AVCA QN-TG-3

9 March 1968

SUBJECT: Synopsis of Ambush

Commanding Officer
US Army Support Command, Qui Nhon
APO 96238

On 8 March 1968, an 8th Transportation Group convoy under the control of the 54th Transportation Battalion, departed Qui Nhon for Pleiku on route 19 at approximately 0600 hours. The convoy consisted of 79 task vehicles, 4 gun jeeps and 5 gun trucks. At approximately 0830 hours, the third gun truck of the first serial was hit with a claymore mine (vic BR 335455) damaging the front tires. The explosion was followed by heavy small arms and automatic fire from both sides of the road. The enemy force of undetermined size was strung from 1500-2000 meters in well fortified and planned positions. Convoy security personnel immediately opened fire. Three quad 50's, from the 4/60 Arty traveling with the convoy were joined by a company of the 173rd AB Bde, which was in the immediate area, encasing the enemy. The company commander of the 173rd unit was killed in the engagement. The enemy force attempted to repel the flanking action of the tactical security force but was driven back after 15 minutes of heavy contact. One gun truck and one task vehicle were damaged. Two US personnel WIA (one convoy and one 173rd) and one US KIA (173rd) were reported. The convoy was allowed to proceed after twenty minutes delay. At approximately 0915 hours, approximately 2 kilometers west of CP 102 (vic BR 257482), a task vehicle in the first serial hit a mine. The cab of the vehicle was struck by small arms fire, wounding the driver. This was followed by a B40 rocket which ignited the cargo (JP4). Small arms, automatic weapons fire and rockets were directed against the column. The convoy security element fired in the direction of the enemy positions as the convoy maneuvered around the burning vehicle. Tactical security forces from the 173rd and the 4th Division arrived within 5 minutes and engaged the enemy. The enemy force of undetermined size established a kill zone of approximately 300-500 meters. The convoy was hit with small arms and automatic

AVCA QN-TG-3

SUBJECT: Synopsis of Ambush

weapons and rockets. One US WIA, one vehicle damaged and one vehicle destroyed resulted from the enemy action. The total number of enemy casualties for both ambushes has not been reported by the tactical force. Number of enemy KIA/WIA by convoy personnel is unknown.

TEL: PT 786/779

/t/ Joe O. Bellino

/s/ JOE O. BELLINO

Colonel, TC

Commanding

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MANUEL C. SENSIN, JR.
LTC, INF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 8TH TRANSPORTATION GROUP (MOTOR TRANSPORT)
APO 96238

AVCA QN-TG-3

17 March 1968

SUBJECT: Synopsis of Ambush

Commanding Officer
US Army Support Command, Qui Nhon
APO 96238

On 16 March 1968, an 8th Transportation Group convoy, under the control of the 124th Transportation Battalion, departed Dak To for Pleiku on Route 14 at approximately 1430 hours. The convoy consisted of 17 task vehicles, 1 gun jeep, 3 gun trucks and 1 3/4 ton maintenance truck with M-60 machine gun mounted. Military Police from the 4th Infantry Division were escorting the convoy. At approximately 1800 hours in the vicinity of ZA 195689, the rear element of the convoy came under heavy small arms and automatic weapons fire. Convoy security personnel immediately fired in the direction of suspected enemy positions and the convoy moved rapidly out of the kill zone, which was estimated as 100-150 meters in length. Tanks from the tactical forces arrived within 3-5 minutes and gunships within 5-10 minutes. The 3/4 ton maintenance vehicle was damaged. One soldier machine gunner in the maintenance vehicle was KIA. The unit designation of the enemy force, which was estimated at platoon size, and number of enemy casualties are unknown.

TEL: PT 786/779

/s/ Joe O. Bellino
/t/ JOE O. BELLINO
Colonel, TC
Commanding

"A TRUE COPY"


MANUEL J. ASENSIO, JR.
LTC, INF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 8TH TRANSPORTATION GROUP (MOTOR TRANSPORT)
APO 96238

AVCA QN-TG-3

23 March 1968

SUBJECT: Synopsis of Convoy Incident

Commanding Officer
US Army Support Command, Qui Nhon
APO 96238

On 23 March 1968, a night shuttle convoy was proceeding west on highway #1 toward loading sites in Cha Rang Valley. At approximately 0015 hours, the convoy consisting of 5 task vehicles, 1 gun truck and 1 gun jeep, approached ROK bridge (vic CR 002273). The convoy commander, 1LT Paul J. Stegmayer, observed a pipe line fire in the vicinity of Tuy Phouc. After reporting the same, 1LT Stegmayer proceeded with his column. As the convoy reached the site of the fire, an explosion occurred on the north side of the road near 1LT Stegmayer's jeep, followed by heavy small arms and automatic weapons fire. Although both 1LT Stegmayer and his driver received wounds from flying glass and shrapnel, they were able to cross over the bridge at the site of the pipe line fire. Due to the intense enemy fire, only the jeep and one task vehicle were able to clear the "kill zone". Despite great personal danger, 1LT Stegmayer, braving a withering hail of bullets, crossed back over the bridge on foot to take control of the drivers and insure that they could clear the scene. Moving from vehicle to vehicle, 1LT Stegmayer assured himself that all drivers were out of their vehicles and had taken up positions to engage the enemy. He crossed back to his jeep to radio reports to Battalion and adjust illuminating artillery rounds. With arrival of reaction force of 3 gun trucks, 1 gun jeep and a quad 50, 1LT Stegmayer again crossed over the bridge to direct flanking fire into suspected enemy positions. The enemy force estimated at 15 personnel, broke contact and fled the area. All six vehicles in the convoy received small arms and automatic weapons fire. Four personnel were wounded. Intelligence reports indicated that the enemy's mission was to destroy the dual bridges (railroad and highway) at the site of the pipe line fire thus cutting a vital link on the only main highway between Qui Nhon and major tactical forces to the north and west. With the arrival of the shuttle convoy, the enemy, for reasons unknown, fired on the column. It has been recommended that the enemy may have mistaken the convoy as a reaction

AVCA QN-TG-3

SUBJECT: Synopsis of Convoy Incident

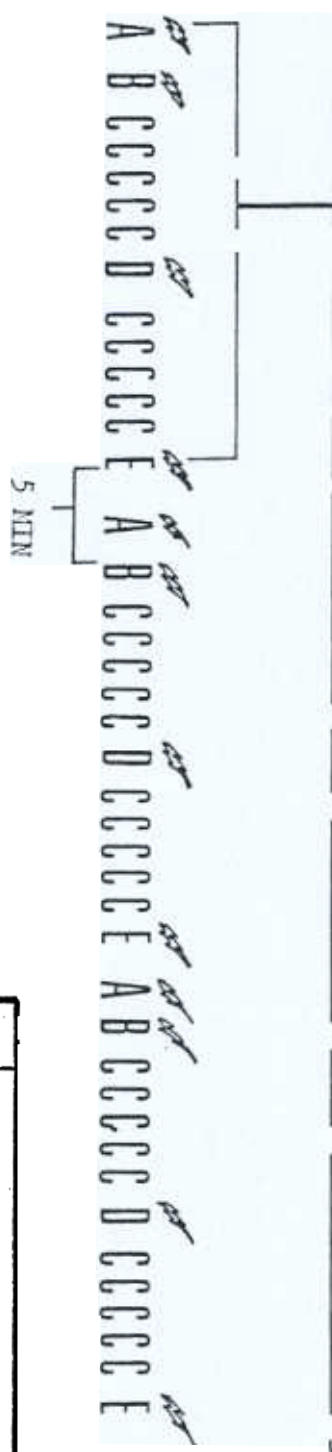
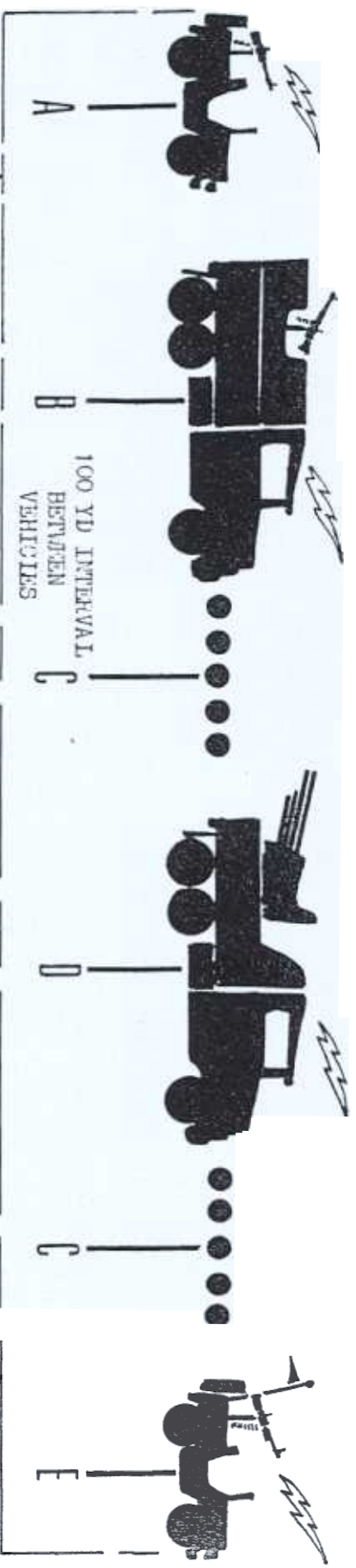
force investigating the pipe line fire. The action by 1LT Stegmayer and his men contributed to the failure of the enemy to accomplish their mission of interdiction of LOC's to the north and west.

TEL: PT 786/779


/s/ Joe O. Bellino
/t/ JOE O. BELLINO
Colonel, TC
Commanding

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MANUEL J. ASENSIO, JR.
LTC, INF



HARDENED CONVOY CONCEPT

A	4 TON GUN (HECON)		RADIO
B	2 1/2 TON GUN TRUCK		
C	TASK VEHICLE		
D	1 TON W/L. x 50 CAL. MG		
E	CON 3 (CONTROL)		

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS 1 FIELD FORCE VIETNAM
APO San Francisco 96350

AVFA-CG

23 Nov 67

SUBJECT: Letter of Commendation

THRU: Commanding General
1st Logistical Command
APO 96307

TO: Commanding General
United States Army Support Command, Qui Nhon
APO 96238

1. The United States Army Support Command, Qui Nhon has responded to tactical requirements in Dak To and Kontum in a highly effective manner during the period of intensified operations commencing in early November. Although faced with the difficult task of responding to rapidly changing support bases of our tactical forces, and with partial loss of the Dak To ammunition supply point, your command has demonstrated reliability, flexibility and uncommon responsiveness, exceeding even the outstanding support you have rendered habitually.

2. The can-do attitude of the United States Army Support Command, Qui Nhon continues to be a salient factor in the successes enjoyed by I FFORCEV tactical operations. I congratulate you and your officers and men for this exemplary display of teamwork, dedicated service and mission accomplishment.

/s/W.B. Rosson
/t/W.B. ROSSON
Lt Gen, USA
Commanding

Copy Furnished:
CG, USARV
CG, 4th Inf Div

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MANUEL J. ASENSIO, JR.
LTC, INF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS 4TH INFANTRY (IVY) DIVISION
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDING GENERAL
APO San Francisco 96262

27 November 1967

Dear General McBride:

I would like to commend the elements of your command who reacted so aggressively during the ambush on Highway 19E on 24 November 1967.

Due to the rapid return of fire by the soldiers in the convoy which fixed the enemy in position, the effectiveness of the ambush was curtailed, friendly casualties were reduced, and the reaction force was able to flank and engage the enemy. Also, the armored 2½ ton trucks in the convoy provided rapid return fire that afforded the convoy covering fire until the reaction force could relieve the column. Without this aggressive reaction on the part of the soldiers in the convoy, the casualties undoubtedly would have been much higher and the effectiveness of the reaction force would have been greatly reduced.

Please convey to the soldiers who participated in this action my commendation for their outstanding conduct while under fire.

/s/ W.R. Peers
/t/ W.R. PEERS
Major General, USA
Commanding

Brigadier General George H. McBride, USA
US Army Support Command, Qui Nhon
APO 96238

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MANUEL J. ABENSIO, JR.
LTC, INF

AVDF-CG

29 December 1967

SUBJECT: Letter of Appreciation

THRU: Commanding General
United States Army Support Command
Qui Nhon, Republic of Vietnam
APO San Francisco 96238

TO: Colonel Joe O. Bellino Jr.
Commanding Officer
8th Transportation Group, HHD
United States Army Support Command, Qui Nhon
APO San Francisco 96238

1. I wish to acknowledge the professional accomplishments of your command and express my sincere appreciation for the efficient manner in which you staged and moved the 11th Light Infantry Brigade to Duc Pho during the period 14-24 December 1967.

2. The orderly manner in which vehicles were marshalled, topped off, sandbagged and organized for convoy movement was truly outstanding.

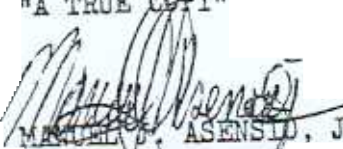
3. It is obvious that the dedicated interest and the unit pride of all members of your command contributed greatly to the successful tactical movement of the 11th Light Infantry Brigade.

4. The fact that all organic vehicles, equipment and personnel of an entire brigade were moved 75 miles overland under hazardous conditions without a single serious incident attests to the abilities and professionalism of your command.

5. Please pass on my most sincere and hearty appreciation for a job well done.

/s/ S.W. Koster
/t/ S.W. KOSTER
Major General, U.S. Army
Commanding

"A TRUE COPY"


MARCEL S. ASENSIO, JR.
LTC, INF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF CHAPLAINS
WASHINGTON D.C. 20315

26 January 1968

Colonel Joe O. Bellino
CO
8th Trans Gp
APO 96238

Dear Colonel Bellino:

Please accept my appreciation for making possible one of the highlights of my visit to Vietnam. You can be justly proud of the beautiful chapel which your men fashioned with their own hands. It was a distinct honor for me to participate in this dedication service.

I shall long remember the Chapel of the Valley with its beautiful tile, magnificent wrought iron grill work, impressive altar and the interesting cross of welded scrap iron. I am confident this chapel will be a source of endless blessing to all who worship there. Please convey my gratitude to all your men who gave of their time, energy and talents to make this dream a reality.

I especially enjoyed the music provided by the girls' choir from Trinh Vuong High School of Qui Nhon. Assure Sister Mary Gabriel that the music she and her girls provided was enjoyed immensely.

Thank you again for inviting me to participate in this memorable occasion. May God continue to bless you and your men as you carry out your tremendously important support responsibilities.

Sincerely,

/s/Father Sam
/t/FRANCIS L. SAMPSON
Chaplain (Major General), USA
Chief of Chaplains

I cited the dedication ceremony to the G-1 (DCSPER) conference as a highlight of my Far East trip and a proof of morale.

"A TRUE COPY"



FRANCIS L. SAMPSON, JR.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, US ARMY SUPPORT COMMAND, QUI NHON
APO 96238

AVCA QN-CO

22 March 1968

Colonel Joe O. Bellino Jr.
Commanding Officer
8th Transportation Group
APO 96238

Dear Colonel Bellino:

I note with pleasure the attached letter of appreciation from Colonel
TRAN-VAN-XOI, Director of Defense Transportation of RVNAF, Saigon, Vietnam.

It is gratifying to note that you are providing such excellent assistance
and technical advice to our Vietnamese counterparts.

I am confident you and the members of your command will continue to render
outstanding service.

Sincerely,

/s/ William H. O'Connell
/t/ WILLIAM H. O'CONNELL
Colonel, Artillery
Commanding

"A TRUE COPY"

MANUEL A. ASENSIO, JR.
LTC, INF

APO. 3031, 7 March 1968

From: Colonel TRAN-VAN-XOI
DIRECTOR OF DEFENSE TRANSPORTATION
OF RVNAF SAIGON

To: Colonel JOE O. BELLINO Jr.
COMMANDING OFFICER OF THE 8th
TRANSPORTATION GROUP IN VIET-NAM
APO. 96.238

Dear Colonel BELLINO;

I have a great pleasure to express my sincere and warm thanks to you for your assistance to our transportation agencies and units in the integration of our trucks to your motor convoy in the 2nd tactical corps zone.

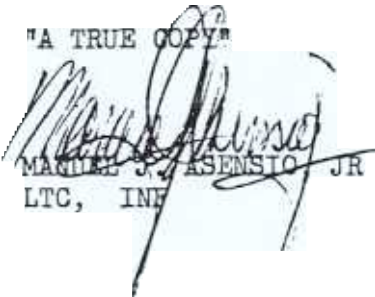
This technical system has helped us to move supplies adequately and timely to our combat soldiers to meet their requirements.

I hope that you will provide us with the same assistance to help us in the performance of our logistical transport support mission.

Sincerely,

/s/ Tran Van Xoi
/t/ Colonel TRAN-VAN-XOI

"A TRUE COPY"


MANUEL J. ASENSIO JR
LTC, INF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY TRANSPORTATION SCHOOL
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDANT
FORT EUSTIS, VIRGINIA 23604

AHRE-TS

15 March 1968

SUBJECT: Transportation Developments

TO:

* * * * * E X T R A C T * * * * *

1. 8TH TRANSPORTATION GROUP (MOTOR TRANSPORT) ARMED AND ARMORED AGAINST AMBUSH. Colonel Joe Bellino, Commanding Officer of the 8th Transportation Group, admits that he has fallen in love with the 8th Group because of their outstanding ability to successfully perform a logistical mission in the face of almost constant enemy harassment. In a recent letter he explained that in World War II and in Korea, highway transport units on occasion had operated over mined roads, received harassing fire, been attacked, and been ambushed. But he said, "Our convoys (in Vietnam) get one form or another of it damn near every day."

The 8th Group operates as far north as Bong Son and as far west as Pleiku. On a mission-type basis the trucks of the 8th Group move from Pleiku and Qui Nhon to Dak To, and almost daily they wind their way to ROK units in Song Cau.

A variety of roadbeds bear the tire marks of the 8th's trucks, from Qui Nhon and Route 19 to An Khe. An Khe Pass is a series of hairpin turns extending 8 kilometers up a mountainous slope. West of An Khe is Mang Giang Pass--4 torturous kilometers of climbing roadway.

The area through which the 8th Group operates is heavily infested with enemy snipers and mines, and ambush is an ever-present threat. Colonel Bellino analyzed the pattern of ambush and thoroughly indoctrinated his troops in procedures to minimize the effects of an unexpected attack of the moving convoy.

An ambush may occur at any time during the day, but late afternoon and evening hours are most dangerous. A cover of darkness affords the enemy his best opportunity to strike and to escape retaliation. The ambush is quick, well-planned, and difficult to counter. It occurs in a sparsely populated area in which there is heavy foliage. Generally, the site selected is in an area where the convoy passes over a rise into a

bend in the road. The rise hides the action from following trucks. The ambush is of short duration; it is triggered by a command-detonated mine which will stop a vehicle, block the road, and permit heavy automatic weapons fire to bear upon the vehicles following as they push into the kill zone. Usually the enemy will withdraw within 10 minutes, since area reaction forces are quick to respond to calls for help.

When an ambush is encountered, actions are specific and immediate. Control vehicles notify security elements by radio, and reaction forces are swiftly dispatched. Vehicles in the convoy move forward as quickly as possible to escape the kill zone--fast movement reduces the chance of a kill. If the convoy comes to a halt, personnel dismount and return maximum fire. The shoulders of the road may be mined, and personnel must move cautiously. Security vehicles bring a heavy volume of fire on the enemy. This action facilitates the rapid passage of task vehicles through the kill zone.

Hardened vehicles provide convoy security. A gun jeep--equipped with radio, M79 grenade launcher, and M60 machinegun on a pedestal mount--is a prime security vehicle. However, the current ratio of $\frac{1}{4}$ -ton trucks to task vehicles makes it difficult to employ the gun jeeps on the preferred basis of one for every ten task vehicles and leads to the recommendation that each truck company have seven $\frac{1}{4}$ -ton trucks authorized.

The 8th also employs the hardened $2\frac{1}{2}$ -ton truck (gun truck)--the cab and cargo bed sides are covered with armorplate, and the floor of cab and cargo bed is sandbagged. The driver and crew are thus protected from weapons fire and mines. The gun truck is manned by a driver, assistant driver, and two gunners.

The 8th is modifying other motor transport equipment to give added protection against ambush tactics and for convoy security. The multiple caliber 50 machinegun (Quad 50's) on the $2\frac{1}{2}$ -ton truck body is an innovation. This weapon has proven successful when employed in tactical convoys. Formal weapons training to permit employment has been completed, and modification of the gun mounts is now underway. A shortcoming in the use of this weapon is that the threeman crew and the $2\frac{1}{2}$ -ton truck must come from local resources. The 5-ton tractor also has been worked on to give it a degree of protection on the floor and cab sides. The major problem area in this vehicle is that the modification causes a heat increase inside the cab and reduces visibility through the side windows.

Convoy security is in direct proportion to the risk involved. Any afterdark operation outside of Qui Nhon, north of Bong Son, or beyond An Khe is extremely hazardous. Daylight operations from Qui Nhon to An Khe and Bong Son are somewhat less hazardous. The Hardened Convoy Concept is designed for operations in areas considered most hazardous. Convoys normally move in three to five march units of 10 task vehicles each. March units have a gun truck in the lead and a $\frac{1}{4}$ -ton gun jeep for control

at the rear of the unit. When required, the 2½-ton truck on which are mounted the Quad 50's will be in the center of each march unit to give fire support to all vehicles.

Operational problems determine the time interval between march units. As equipment becomes available, an additional gun jeep will be employed at every interval between march units to prevent the enemy from using this time gap to his advantage. A reconnaissance vehicle will also be used in advance of the convoy in the most hazardous areas. Key vehicles used in convoys are equipped with radios, and although communications are a problem, the 8th can communicate within its areas of operations. U.S. Army aircraft are used for convoy cover and do monitor the group's radio frequency.

Colonel Bellino has already firmed up his thinking on some things that must be done to permit a truck group to perform at peak efficiency in a war such as the one in Vietnam. He recommends that each truck company have a minimum of seven ½-ton trucks authorized. Since hardened 2½-ton trucks are used in medium truck units for security purposes, five such trucks should be issued to each medium company. This vehicle, however, is an interim measure until the V-100 Commando Armored Car, a superior vehicle for convoy security, can be furnished.

The ambush instructions upon which the 8th Transportation Group (Motor Transport) driver relies are briefly stated:

Before Ambush--Be alert for changes in familiar scenes along the route

Expect ambush upon detonation of mines, automatic weapons fire, heavy sniper fire.

During Ambush--Radio security force--Contact! Contact! Contact!

Continue moving--maintain interval.

Follow in tracks of vehicle ahead to prevent further detonation of road mines.

If disabled, steer off road--permit passage of others--dismount--mount passing vehicle.

Avoid entering kill zone--provide flanking support fire into kill zone.

Remember that gun trucks provide maximum base of fire--fight as a team; deploy upon command.

Remember prime targets--enemy automatic weapons positions, enemy mortars, rocket positions, assaulting ground forces.

After Ambush--Protect and care for wounded personnel; evacuate them ASAP.

Reopen roadways--assure roadways are mine free.

Contact EOD to remove mines.

Provide flank security.

When contact is broken, do not give chase.

Stay alert for counterattack.

Remember details.

Colonel Bellino's statement that "What we are doing here is unique in Transportation Corps history" is reinforced by the remarks of General Westmoreland about "the outstanding job done by the transportation truckers who kept supplies coming so that the combat troops (at Dak To) could keep pressure on the enemy," and by the remarks of the ex-tanker commander, General Abrams, Deputy to General Westmoreland, who said "The 8th Group truckers who were ambushed near Pleiku on 24 November 1967 were a bunch of frustrated tankers."—No higher compliment could be paid another soldier by an ex-tanker commander than that.

/s/ W.N. Redling
/t/ W.N. REDLING
Major General, USA
Commandant

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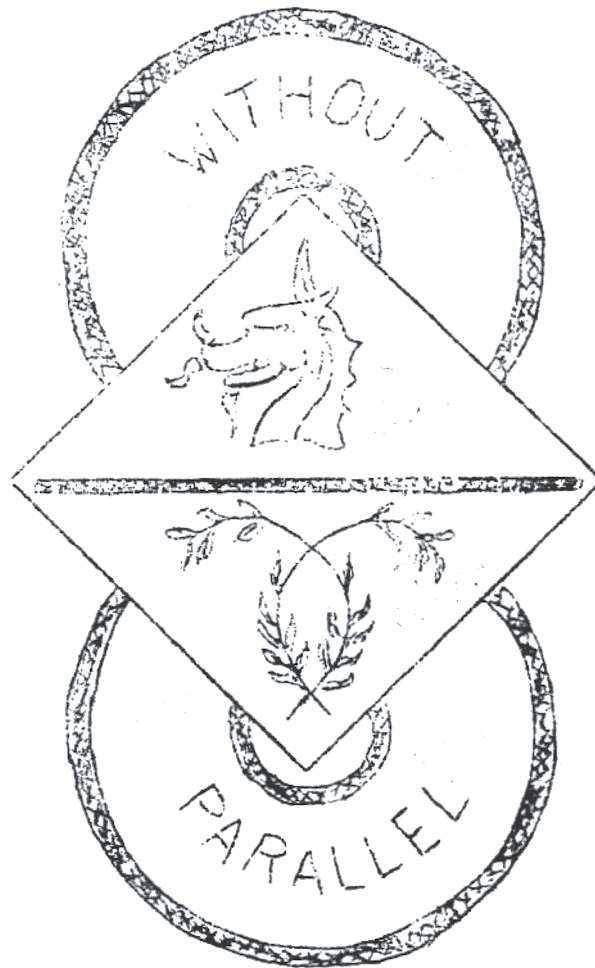

MARCEL G. LSENSIS JR.
LTC, INF

MONTH	POL		PASSENGERS		RETROGRADE CARGO		LINE HAUL CARGO		LOCAL HAUL CARGO		TON MILES	
	GALLONS	MILES	PAX	MILES	TONS	MILES	TONS	MILES	TONS	MILES	LOCAL	LINE
SEP	104,425	807	420	2,050	25,776	221,710	51,447	705,093	22,694	233,526	270,739	4,025,000
OCT	107,693	752	336	3,183	8,976	238,014	50,004	557,949	22,944	237,081	237,057	3,931,656
NOV	664,982	643			12,282	248,129	61,492	774,987	27,698	248,520	413,300	6,892,121
DEC	557,358	12,478	588	3,335	7,134	125,851	58,403	555,704	16,496	27,051	297,808	4,643,244
JAN	1,306,089	57,885	3,972	32,138	13,112	130,720	58,827	247,444	15,556	24,366	320,951	4,737,076
FEB	573,504	15,368	690	1,600	7,236	98,453	25,779	326,592	8,269	16,434	321,411	3,764,927
MAR	1,141,119	67,673	15,409	31,229	9,056	84,671	72,268	941,921	21,621	68,587	462,248	3,848,988

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COM VOT

SECURITY



8TH TRANSPORTATION
GROUP

INDEX

TAB A - IMPACT OF ENEMY ACTION-----

TAB B - AMBUSH-----

TAB C - TACTICAL SUPPORT FOR CONVOYS-----

TAB D - ANNEX A (VEHICLE OPERATIONS)-----

TAB E - HIGHWAY 19 SOP FOR LOGISTICAL AND SECURITY ELEMENTS-----

TAB F - SYNOPSIS OF AMBUSH (2 September 1967)-----

TAB G - SYNOPSIS OF AMBUSH (24 November 1967)-----

TAB H - SYNOPSIS OF AMBUSH (4 December 1967)-----

TAB I - SYNOPSIS OF AMBUSH (21 February 1968)-----

TAB J - SYNOPSIS OF AMBUSH (12 May 1968)-----

TAB K - SYNOPSIS OF AMBUSH (14 August 1968)-----

TAB L - SYNOPSIS OF AMBUSH (23 August 1968)-----

TAB M - SYNOPSIS OF AMBUSH (31 August 1968)-----

IMPACT OF ENEMY ACTIONS

The purpose of this next chart is two fold:

- A. It will summarize the extent of our losses.
- B. It will portray where/when/why we are taking these losses.

On 2 September 1967, enemy forces initiated an effort to stop or reduce supplies moving into the Central Highlands via QL 19.

His initial attempt was directed at an 8th Trans Group convoy returning from Pleiku. The ambush that occurred at 1855 hours, 2 September 1967, was a great success for "Charlie". It was a well planned, well executed ambush in generally the same area where the French Mobilo Group 100 was decimated shortly after the fall of Dien Bien Phu.

Since that time a total of 35 ambushes have been attempted against convoys on QL 19 and QL 14 N. (26 - 8th T Gp; 6 - "Charlie" thought was 8th T Gp; and 3 - 240th QM Bn Pet).

Although the 8th Trans Group has been successful in retaliating against hostile forces as a result of the development and employment of certain techniques and equipment, I do not believe that success can be measured by "kill ratio" alone, considering the fact that some of the ambushes were poorly planned, poorly timed and poorly executed by inexperienced people. The results of the Group's efforts might be termed lucky and could account for the success in retaliation. The real success or failure of the hostile actions against convoys must be considered in the light of impact on our primary mission.

Because of the enemy activity several major changes have occurred in 8th Transportation Group operations.

Tactical commanders reduced the operating hours on the roads.

8th Group dedicated approximately 10% of the task resources (men and equipment) to convoy security.

In addition to the 36 ambushes, there have been a total of 187 other incidents i.e. 65 mining incidents; 65 sniper incidents; 16 bridges blown and 39 other incidents e.g. road closures due to enemy activity, mortar attacks, etc.

All these incidents have accounted for a total of 38 US KIA (33 - 8th T Gp), 203 US WIA (178 - 8th T Gp) vs 104 NVA/VC KIA (87 - 8th T Gp), 10 NVA/VC WIA (8 - 8th T Gp) and 5 NVA/VC POW

The number of vehicles that have been damaged or destroyed has been a total of 287 (233 - 8th T Gp).

The losses of men and equipment of the 8th Trans Group to security requirements, casualties and battle losses surpasses the capabilities of two truck companies.

Each action that the enemy takes in his attempts to interdict the LOC's cuts the operating time further from minutes, to hours, to closure for the day. This results in loaded vehicles unable to reach the consignee or empty vehicles unable to return for loads.

These incidents have directly resulted in the RON of more than 6,275 vehicles which represents a total of more than 52,075 short tons that have not been moved forward.

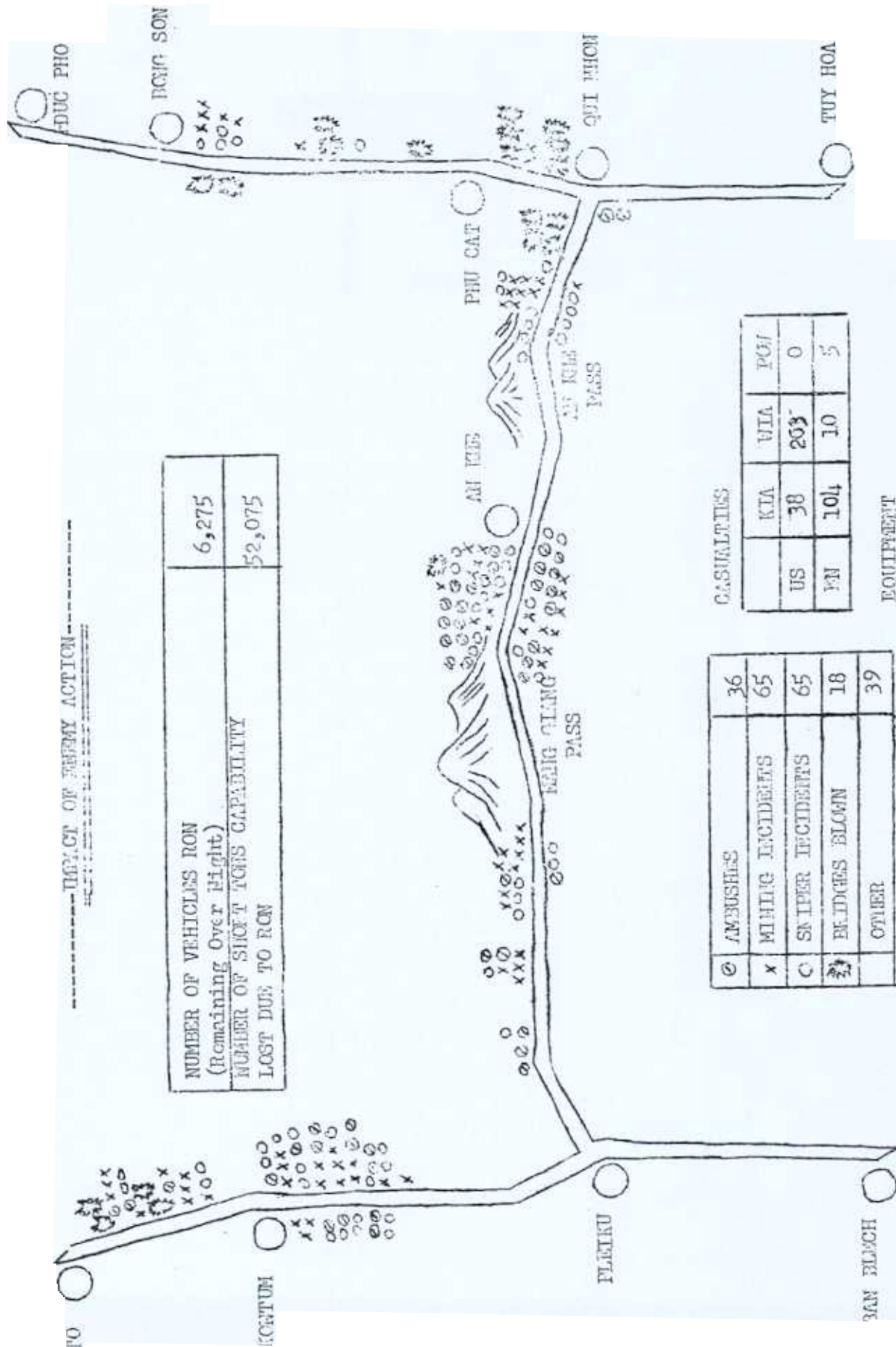
The tonnage lost due to security, casualties, battle losses, cargo losses, shortened operating hours, more frequent MON's from a multitude of related items, is nearly impossible to compute.


Against a very determined enemy, as history has proven him to be, the security that the convoy can provide is not adequate, nor can it be made adequate within the resources of the 8th Transportation Group.

Lasting security for transportation must be in the form of special combined arms teams organized and trained to accompany and protect convoys through insecure areas.

OL. NYC

NUMBER OF VEHICLES ROWN (Remaining Over Night)	6,275
NUMBER OF SHEET TONS CAPABILITY LOST DUE TO ROWN	52,075



Q	AMBUSHES	36
X	MINE INCIDENTS	65
C	SNIPER INCIDENTS	65
	BOMBINGS BLOWN	18
	OTHER	39

CASSIDITY

	KTA	VTA	POF
US	38	203	0
IN	104	10	5

EQUIPMENT

VEHICLES DAMAGED/DESTROYED	287
-------------------------------	-----

8TH TRANSPORTATION GROUP (MOTOR TRANSPORT)

-----AMBUSH-----

These ambush instructions have been developed from lessons learned in Vietnam by the 8th Transportation Group (Motor Transport). Your mission and your life may depend upon how well you learn these lessons.

1. KEEP WEAPON READY TO FIRE.
2. BE ALERT FOR CHANGES IN FAMILIAR SCENES ALONG ROUTE.
3. USE YOUR WEAPON. RETURN FIRE IMMEDIATELY.
4. NOTIFY SECURITY FORCE BY RADIO CALL-CONTACT CONTACT CONTACT
5. CONTINUE MOVING, MAINTAINING INTERVAL IF POSSIBLE
6. TRACK VEHICLE AHEAD TO PREVENT FURTHER DETONATION OF MINES.
7. DON'T ENTER KILL-ZONE IF POSSIBLE.
8. IF DISABLED AND CONVOY IS MOVING THROUGH KILL-ZONE, MOUNT A PASSING VEHICLE.
9. PROVIDE FLANKING SUPPORT FIRE INTO KILL-ZONE

GUN TRUCKS APPLY MAXIMUM BASE OF FIRE; FIGHT AS A TEAM, DEPLOY UPON COMMAND.

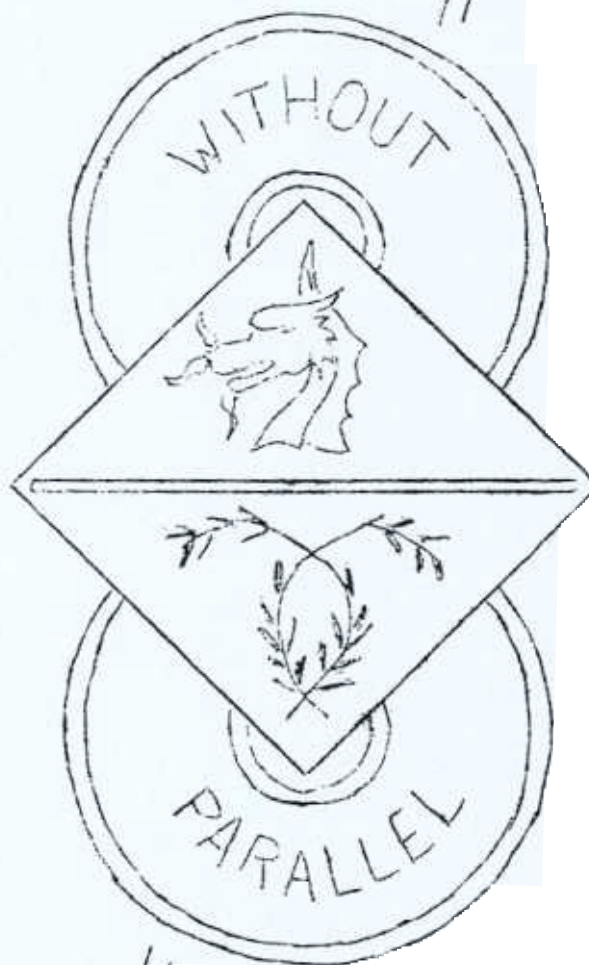
PRIME TARGETS ARE: ENEMY AUTOMATIC WEAPONS POSITIONS, ENEMY MORTAR ROCKET POSITIONS AND ASSAULTING GROUND TROOPS.

STAY ON THE HARD-SURFACE.

REMEMBER DETAILS.

TACTICAL SUPPORT FOR CONVOYS

1. ROADSIDE CLEARANCE
2. DEFOLIATE PASSES
3. ADDITIONAL ARTILLERY SUPPORT
4. ROAD CZAR
5. FLYING FAC
6. GUNSHIPS OVER CONVOY
7. ADDITIONAL APC/TANK SUPPORT
8. TACTICAL CONVOY MAKE-UP
9. CLUSTER SIGNAL SYSTEM
10. TACTICAL FREQUENCY



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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
Headquarters I Field Force Vietnam
APO San Francisco 96350

AVHIC AK

SUBJECT: Hwy 19 SOP for Logistical and Security Elements

SEE DISTRIBUTION

17 July 1968

1. PURPOSE: The purpose of this SOP is to provide instructions to units utilizing and securing Hwy 19 from QUI NHON to PLEIKU.
2. GENERAL: All units utilizing Hwy 19 will familiarize themselves with the references listed in para 7 of this SOP and the instructions contained herein and will insure compliance by all personnel and securing Hwy 19 from QUI NHON to PLEIKU.
3. UNIFORM: Personnel traveling Hwy 19 will carry their weapons with basic load of ammo, protective mask, and wear the following equipment:
 - a. Duty uniform.
 - b. Steel helmet.
 - c. Fragmentation jacket.
4. RESPONSIBILITIES:
 - a. Highway 19 Coordinator:

Coordinate all movement and security on Hwy 19.

 - (2) Resolve any areas of conflict between security forces and units using the highway.
 - (3) Conduct a monthly coordination meeting with representatives of all elements concerned with Hwy 19.
 - (4) Prepare directives, as necessary, for the utilization and security of Hwy 19.

Notify security and logistical elements of problem areas.
 - b. Security Elements:
 - (1) Provide security for Hwy 19 in AO.

Cancellation of protective marking can
not be determined at this time.

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(2) Prepare and maintain contingency plans for basic ambush reaction and night convoy operations within AO.

(3) Maintain NCS on the convoy control net over which convoys may request tactical assistance.

(4) Insure that convoy commanders entering the AO are fully cognizant of road situation (stress points, by-passes, and construction).

(5) Assume operational control of all convoys, combat support, combat service support and any other FVMAF entering assigned AO.

(6) Coordinate plans and instructions pertaining to Hwy 19 with the I FFORCEV Hwy 19 Coordinator, Military Police and all units utilizing Hwy 19.

c. Units using the highway:

(1) Insure that contingency plans are maintained for convoy security and night convoy operations.

(2) Instruct and equip convoy personnel in accordance with the instructions contained in this SOP and I FFORCEV Reg 55-4.

(3) Insure that convoy commanders coordinate with the appropriate tactical commander upon entering each AO (by entering the convoy control net) and comply with instructions.

(4) Brief all convoy personnel on proper speed, interval, and ambush reaction prior to departure of convoy from SP.

(5) Insure that sufficient radios, control vehicles, and personnel accompany each convoy to maintain convoy discipline.

(6) Assist in prohibiting the establishment of starting time patterns.

(7) Insure that personnel police marshalling and rest areas.

(8) Enforce posted speed limit or reduce speed commensurate with existing road, weather and traffic conditions.

(9) Prepare an after-action report of all ambushes involving convoys, furnishing the Highway 19 Coordinator with one copy.

d. Military Police:

(1) Enforce posted speed limit or reduce speeds commensurate with existing road, weather and traffic conditions.

(2) Provide convoy escort on specific mission request. Otherwise patrol the Highway to provide assistance as needed (P escort may be requested from CG, I FFORCEV, CG, 4th Inf Div or CG, 173d Abn Bde).

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(3) Cite individuals who fail to comply with the provisions of I FFORCEV Reg 55-4.

(4) Provide traffic control at defiles, congested areas, one-way bridges and sites where incidents have occurred, as requested by tactical commander.

(5) Effect coordination with civilian police agencies for assistance in the control of indigenous personnel/traffic.

e. Convoy Commander:

(1) Brief all convoy personnel on convoy speed, interval, uniform, communications instructions, and action to be taken during ambush, sniper fire and mining incidents.

(2) Insure that panel markings are mounted to identify the lead and trail elements of each march unit and that all vehicles utilize their headlights (I FFORCEV Reg 55-4).

(3) Notify and coordinate with security elements when entering a tactical AO. Utilizing the appropriate security net, report check points.

(4) Be responsible for the conduct and appearance of all personnel in the convoy.

(5) Insure that all road, tactical, emergency and medical evacuation frequencies are current and available to all control elements within the convoy.

(6) Insure recovery (within capability) of disabled/wrecked vehicles.

(7) Comply with instructions received from the tactical commander along the route.

5. SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:

a. Convoy composition and March Discipline: See IFV Reg 55-4, para 7.

b. Night convoy movements: Annex A.

c. Command and control:

(1) A minimum of three control vehicles (radio equipped) will be in each convoy.

(2) For convoys with more than one march unit, two control vehicles with radios per march unit and one for the convoy commander is acceptable.

(3) One radio equipped vehicle will be located near the lead and tail of each march unit. Other control vehicles will be placed at random locations in the convoy and will occasionally fall out of the column, observe and correct the march discipline and interval. The maintenance element may perform as control element for rear of convoy/march unit unless it falls out.

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to assist disabled vehicles. When maintenance elements fall out, it will be replaced with another control vehicle. Reports are not required from maintenance vehicles which have fallen out to assist vehicles.

(4) When the operational situation permits, senior drivers will be assigned to operate convoy vehicles and assistant drivers will act as "shotgunners".

d. Internal security:

(1) The floors of all vehicles will have sandbag protection for personnel against mines. Cargo trucks carrying troops will have sandbags in the cargo bed.

(2) Daytime vehicular interval will be 100 meters. For night intervals see Annex A).

(3) A vehicular interval of not less than 25 meters will be maintained when the column is halted at control points.

(4) Speed may be determined by the convoy commander but will not exceed 25 mph on highways and 15 mph in cities, towns or villages. A "Catch Up" speed of 30 mph is authorized.

e. Recovery operations:

(1) Each convoy should have the following repair and recovery vehicles as a minimum:

(a) One (1) wrecker.

(b) One (1) maintenance truck equipped with tires, tools, and minimum spare parts.

(c) Tow-bars as available.

(2) Recovery of disabled vehicles will be accomplished as expeditiously as possible.

(3) Those vehicles which cannot be repaired in a short period of time will be towed to the nearest strongpoint and the location reported to the responsible recovery unit. (Convoy Commanders will determine identity of the responsible recovery unit prior to departure).

(4) Prior to leaving a disabled vehicle at a location along the route, insure that the load is secured (has not shifted).

f. Reaction to ambush, mines, sniper

(1) Ambushes:

(a) All vehicles which are beyond the "kill zone" will continue moving toward their destination.

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(b) Those vehicles which are caught in the "kill zone" will attempt to move out of the "kill zone". Should they be forced to stop, the driver and passenger will dismount on opposite sides of the vehicle, take up covered and concealed positions, and lay down a heavy volume of return fire only on active enemy targets, staying in close proximity to their vehicles. In no case will convoy personnel close with or attempt to pursue the enemy as this will interfere with the tactical reaction plan. Convoy personnel will cease fire upon arrival of tactical security elements to allow tactical vehicles and personnel freedom of movement against enemy forces. Convoy control personnel will insure that traffic begins to move as soon as the tactical situation permits.

(c) Those vehicles which have not yet entered the "kill zone" will halt at 100 meter intervals, dismount and defend as described in paragraph (b) above, firing only if the enemy targets are visible.

(d) If the tactical situation permits, move disabled vehicles from the road.

(2) Mining Incidents:

(a) If a mine disables a vehicle, the convoy commander must determine whether to proceed around the vehicle or halt the convoy. Normally a convoy should not halt unless the road is blocked or there is evidence of more mines.

(b) If the convoy is halted by mines, the convoy commander will immediately alert the security elements and disperse his personnel around the vehicles in preparation for an attack.

(3) Sniper fire:

(a) If the convoy or a segment of the convoy receives sniper fire, fire should be returned and vehicles will continue moving.

(b) The convoy commander will attempt to determine the location of the fire and report it to the tactical forces securing that portion of the route.

g. Halts enroute:

(1) Maintain an interval of 25 meters when at the halt, if the space situation permits, but in all instances leave sufficient interval to allow vehicles to pull around the vehicle to their front.

(2) When halted, all vehicles will pull to the far right side of the road, remaining on the paved surface, so as to allow traffic to pass unrestricted.

(3) Traffic guides will be posted at the front and rear of each column to facilitate the movement of traffic.

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(4) Convoy personnel will stay in close proximity to their vehicles for control purposes and will wear the steel helmet, fragmentation jacket and carry their weapons.

(5) Security personnel will not leave their vehicles but will continue to man their automatic weapons and provide security for the halted column.

(6) Indigenous personnel or vehicles will not be allowed to congregate around military vehicles or congest the highway.

(7) When enemy action forces a halt, and the terrain permits, maintain an interval of 100 meters.

6. MISCELLANEOUS:

a. Convoy personnel will not fire their weapons unless under attack.

b. Rounds will not be chambered unless attack is imminent.

c. Convoy clearance and movement numbers will be obtained in accordance with JFVV Reg 55-4, para 6.

d. Tactical and logistical elements will inform the Highway 19 Coordinator (AN XHE 2173/2010/2167) of all developments pertaining to operations on Hwy 19.

e. Vehicles unable to maintain rate of march will fall out of the column and remain with the trail party.

7. REFERENCES:

a. I Field Force Vietnam Regulation 55-4.

b. Annex A - Night Convoy SOP.

c. Special instructions, Highway 19 Convoy Security and Control (U), dated 25 March 1968.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

Incl 1
Annex A

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/s/ Arthur B. Busbey Jr.
/t/ ARTHUR B. BUSBEY JR.
Colonel, AGC
Adjutant General

"A TRUE COPY"

D. Wayne D. Cude
DEWAYNE D. CUDE
Major, TC

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2-G4
2-Engr
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1-Sig
1-FSCE
10-I FFORCEV Arty
5-41st Arty Gp
5-52d Arty Gp
25-Hwy 19 Coordinator

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SOP for Operation of Convoys
On Highway 19 During the Hours of Darkness

1. PURPOSE: The purpose of this Annex is to prescribe guidelines in the planning and movement of critical supplies, by truck convoy on Hwy 19, from stockage areas to forward supply areas during the hours of darkness.

2. GENERAL:

a. The senior tactical commander in the AO has operational control of elements concerned with night convoy operations and is responsible for accomplishment of mission.

b. Night supply convoys will not exceed thirty supply vehicles. Assistant convoy commanders will be assigned to each convoy and assistant drivers will be utilized for each supply vehicle.

c. Convoys will be formed with tactical escort vehicles at the initial marshalling area. Friendly ambushes and strong-points will be established along the route prior to movement of convoy.

d. Security elements will make maximum use of Starlight Scopes, Ground Surveillance Radar, Zenon Searchlights, and helicopter gunships.

e. Air cap (Spooky) will overfly convoy, weather permitting.

f. Artillery fire will be placed on likely ambush sites along convoy route. Where artillery fire cannot be employed, tactical escort vehicles and strong-points will conduct recon by fire into likely ambush sites.

g. Prior to movement of convoy all lights will be operational on tactical and logistical vehicles. The decision to use headlights, blackout lights, or a combination will be made by the tactical commander on the ground.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES:

a. Coordinator, Highway 19

Advise, assist and coordinate security and logistical elements.

(2) Monitor preparations and planning and report status to Commander, IFFV.

(3) Conduct a coordination meeting prior to night convoy movement to finalize plans.

(4) Prepare after-action report upon completion of each night movement and disseminate to appropriate agencies.

b. Security Elements:

Increase ambush and patrol activity adjacent to route.

Cancellation of protective marking can not be determined at this time.

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(2) Provide maximum strong-points on route, consistent with ability to provide convoy escort.

(3) Provide tactical vehicle escort for convoy in AO. Where route traverses two or more major unit AO's relief of tactical escort vehicles will be accomplished at firebase nearest AO boundary.

Prior to darkness conduct APD surveillance of route.

(5) Utilize artillery fire and tactical vehicle recon by fire on likely and suspected ambush sites along the route.

(6) Weather permitting, request air cap (Spooky) over route.

(7) Review and update counter-mortar and artillery blocking fire plans

(8) Insure EOD and engineer mine-sweeping personnel accompany tactical escort vehicles.

(9) Insure that a reaction force is available for immediate response.

(10) Coordinate with military police for defile control and necessary liaison with national police.

c. Logistical Elements:

Provide trained, armed assistant drivers for each supply vehicle.

(2) To preclude maintenance problems and shifting of loads, insure that all supply vehicles are in excellent condition and that cargoes are properly secured to the vehicle.

(3) Insure that gun-trucks have radio communication with the convoy commander and operate on the tactical command frequency.

(4) Insure that trail parties have sufficient personnel, equipment and vehicles to tow disabled vehicles to nearest strong-point.

(5) Convoy will not halt for maintenance of vehicles. Disabled vehicles will be towed immediately to nearest strong-point for recovery during daylight hours.

(6) Prior to movement brief all personnel on convoy operations, visual signals, correct interval (50 meters when moving, 25 meters when halted), and emergency actions.

(7) Insure that all personnel have proper equipment to include protective mask, flak jacket, weapon, ammo, and steel helmet.

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8th Trans Gp (MT)
6 September 1968

ANNEX A (VEHICLE OPERATIONS) to Standing Operating Procedures

1. PURPOSE: To provide guidance for prompt, secure and efficient accomplishment of the motor transport missions assigned to the 8th Transportation Group (Motor Transport).

2. SCOPE: Applicable to all motor transport and transportation service units attached to the 8th Transportation Group and such elements that might be placed under the operational control of the Group.

3. GENERAL:

a. The guidance contained in this annex will apply in most situations. In those areas where a different or unusual situation is encountered, subordinate units are expected to exercise initiative and sound judgement in selecting a course of action that will insure mission accomplishment.

b. The primary mission of the 8th Transportation Group is the line haul of general and specialized cargo from the Qui Nhon Port and Depot Complex to designated forward support or depot areas. Secondary missions include local haul within the port and depot complex, support of tactical operations and movement of personnel and impedimenta.

4. DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS:

a. Port and Beach Clearance (Local): The movement of cargo originating at an aerial or water port and hauled for a distance not to exceed 25 miles one way.

b. Port and Beach Clearance (Line): The movement of cargo originating at an aerial or water port and hauled for a distance in excess of 25 miles one way.

c. Local Haul: The movement of cargo originating at a supply activity or staging area (other than port or beach) and hauled for a distance not to exceed 25 miles one way.

d. Line Haul: The movement of cargo originating at a supply activity or staging area (other than port or beach) and hauled for a distance in excess of 25 miles one way.

e. Retrograde: Cargo that is transported in the retrograde program, i.e., salvaged vehicles and turn-in property. Cargo which is transported from outlying areas to the port for outloading to another in-country destination is not considered to be retrograde cargo, but rather local or line haul.

8th Trans Gp (RT)
6 September 1968

ANNEX A (VEHICLE OPERATIONS) to Standing Operating Procedures

f. Thruput: A method of cargo movement which bypasses one or more intermediate depots and delivers directly to a consuming agency with line haul equipment.

g. Driveaway: A motor vehicle which is driven by a member of this command as cargo for delivery to consignee.

h. Towaway: A procedure similar to driveaway, but motor transport unit provides prime-mover power for delivery of trailers, semi-trailers or towing of vehicles.

i. Task Force: A term commonly used by logistical command personnel to designate a Forward Support Area (FSA). FSAs are staffed and operated by personnel of the USASUPCOM, QNH for direct support of Forward Support Elements (FSE) in combat zones.

j. DOT: Director of Transportation, the transportation staff officer of USASUPCOM, QNH.

k. TCMD: Transportation Control and Movement Document (DA Form 1384).

5. RESPONSIBILITIES: Subordinate commanders at all echelons are responsible for accomplishment of missions that are assigned by this headquarters.

a. Group S-3 will:

(1) Provide staff action for receipt of missions from higher headquarters

(2) Evaluate requirements against established capabilities.

Assign specific missions to subordinate units.

(4) Monitor progress of units to insure successful execution of assigned missions.

Provide staff planning for operations.

Supervise battalion control of line haul semitrailers.

(7) Collect necessary statistical data.

(8) Submit reports and prepare briefing data for higher headquarters.

Obtain convoy clearances.

8th Trans Gp (MT)
6 September 1968

ANNEX A (VEHICLE OPERATIONS) to Standing Operating Procedures

(10) Maintain liaison with higher and adjacent headquarters to include dissemination of intelligence information as received.

b. Battalion S-3 will:

(1) Keep Group S-3 advised of current motor transport capabilities.

(2) Receive and evaluate bulk tonnage requirements against unit capabilities.

(3) Convert requirements into vehicle equivalents and commit subordinate units accordingly.

(4) Monitor progress of subordinate units to insure all commitments are being met and that all available motor transport is efficiently utilized.

Maintain statistical data for required reports.

(6) Publish detailed guidance to subordinate units to include driver instructions.

(7) Maintain continuous training in vehicle operations.

c. Commanding Officer, Subordinate units will:

(1) Implement directives of higher headquarters.

Train personnel in the techniques of motor transport

Fill commitments for vehicles from higher headquarters.

(4) Maintain operational readiness for support of combat operations.

(5) Ensure that all convoy personnel have necessary weapons, ammunition, protective gear, C-rations and overnight gear prior to dispatch.

(6) Ensure that drivers for Duc Pho and Dak To commitments have taken their Dapsone tablet the night before departure and that another night's supply is carried by the convoy commander to destination.

d. Convoy Commanders will:

ANNEX A (VEHICLE OPERATIONS) to Standing Operating Procedures

- (1) Obtain the latest intelligence information from battalion S-2/3 prior to departure and disseminate to March Unit commanders.
- (2) Obtain information from S-2/3 concerning coordination with tactical combat units providing route security along the MSR.
- (3) Instruct march unit commanders on convoy speed, interval, uniform and communications as well as emphasize the actions to be taken if the convoy encounters an ambush, sniper fire or mines.
- (4) Coordinate with any security elements provided the convoy and mount aircraft marker panels on vehicles as required.
- (5) Be responsible for the conduct and appearance of all personnel involved in the convoy. Brief all personnel from the standard 8th Group Convoy Briefing Chart. This chart includes briefing items such as follows:

Route of march.

Speed limits.

Traffic regulations applicable enroute.

- (d) Control procedures to be used

Critical points enroute.

Procedures in event of hostile fire, mines and snipers.

- (g) "Cluster of the Day" and actions to be taken upon observing cluster.

Driver responsibilities

- (6) Know his locations at all times while in convoy.
- (7) Be thoroughly familiar with the convoy route and all check points.
- (8) Be in possession of the following information before departing.
 - (a) The names of the officers and NCOs who will be supervising the convoy.

8th Trans Gp (MT)
6 September 1968

ANNEX A (VEHICLE OPERATIONS) to Standing Operating Procedures

The complete makeup of the convoy.

The SP and RP times.

(d) The names of the drivers and the bumper numbers of the trucks.

(e) A map of the route traveled.

(9) Comply with instructions received from the tactical commander along the route.

(10) Maintain contact depending on communications equipment available with both unit operations section and the security forces responsible for the area through which the convoy is moving. When only one frequency is available, the convoy commander must remain in contact with security forces. A convoy will not move unless the radio frequencies of the responsible tactical units are known. In addition, the convoy commander shall ensure that all road, tactical, emergency and medical frequencies are current and available to all control elements within the convoy.

(11) Closely supervise the offloading of convoy vehicles at destination. Cargo must be offloaded expeditiously to minimize turn-around time and vehicle RON. Close supervision by officers and NCOs will also prevent improper unloading and the resultant damage to cargo and equipment.

(12) Check to determine if loads are secure prior to convoy movement. Insecure cargo will not be moved.

6. Loading Procedures:

a. Vehicle loading will be accomplished expeditiously and in accordance with 8th Transportation Group Regulation 55-26 and 525-2.

b. Prior to dispatch, each driver will be given an 8th Group Dispatch Slip to verify his commitment and to expedite coordination at the loading site.

c. Almost without exception loading personnel require that drivers report to the operations office at the loading activity to verify loading requirements and destination. Drivers will report to this office with the dispatch slip (para 6b above).

d. Drivers will not accept loads which are unsafe, improperly secured, or improperly documented. Each driver should have in his

8th Trans Gp (MT)
6 September 1968

ANNEX A (VEHICLE OPERATIONS) to Standing Operating Procedures

possession a copy of 8th Transportation Group Regulation 55-26, BLOCKING AND BRACING GUIDE FOR MOTOR TRANSPORT CUSTOMERS. In addition, all drivers should be familiar with the provisions of 8th Transportation Group Regulation 525-2 on Cargo Security. Drivers will not accept or sign for a load until a complete check of the cargo has been made and the information on the TCMD has been verified.

e. Battalions will continually inspect loading practices of using agencies by means of liaison personnel. Vehicles will be loaded to insure the greatest payload possible within the limits of the authorized cubic feet and tonnage practices. The S-3 of 8th Group will be notified of loading or unloading difficulties which cannot be resolved at unit/battalion level.

f. Vehicle payload capacities: The cargo and troop capacities for vehicles in the 8th Group are as follows:

<u>TYPE</u>	<u>CARGO</u>		<u>TROOPS</u>	
	Planning	Maximum	Planning	Maximum
Truck, 2½ ton Cargo	4	5	16*	
Truck, 5 ton Cargo	6	10	16*	
Semitrailer, 12 ton	12	16	50*	
Trailer, 1½ ton	2	2	N/A	

Exceptions to these limits must be approved by S-3 this headquarters.

*Does not include driver or assistant driver.

g. Critical and priority cargo will be so designated by this headquarters at the time the commitment is given to battalion. Strict supervision will be exercised to insure safe and timely delivery in accordance with special handling requirements.

h. Task vehicles must have a minimum of 2 fire extinguishers. A 1½ quart extinguisher will be mounted inside the cab and a 4 pound CO-2 extinguisher will be mounted outside.

i. Drivers will be trained in convoy and signalling procedures to permit the drivers of the following vehicles to signal by 3 quick taps on the horn if pilferage is attempted in a leading vehicle. Convoy commanders will be held responsible for ensuring that security is adequate for his convoy at all times. This security is necessary

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8th Trans Gp (MT)
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ANNEX A (VEHICLE OPERATIONS) to Standing Operating Procedures

in open and unguarded assembly areas as well as in holding areas and when moving on highways.

j. Driver will notify his unit of any change in commitment, destination, cargo, tonnage, or when his vehicle is damaged, delayed, improperly loaded, or improperly documented.

k. Drivers will perform Preventive Maintenance whenever their vehicles are parked at a loading or offloading site and are not being loaded or offloaded.

l. Drivers will notify his unit of difficulties encountered or misuse of vehicles.

m. The driver is responsible for his vehicle being loaded properly. The driver will not transport an insecure load. If the load is insecure, he will immediately notify the OIC of the nearest TTP.

n. All difficulties related to cargo loading at the 58th Field Depot locations should be reported through 8th Group liaison personnel to the depot transportation office. Problems encountered at other locations will be reported to the dispatching unit, either directly or through liaison personnel if available. Unresolved problems should be immediately relayed to the Group Operations Office.

7. Tactical Convoy Operations:

a. Organization and operation of convoys are the responsibility of the operating unit. Techniques and guidance published in FM 55-35 and TM 21-305 as modified herein will be employed. Briefing of convoy personnel as described in para 5e(5) will be given prior to crossing IP.

b. The type of convoy will be specified by the Battalion to operating units at the time commitment is assigned.

c. Convoy schedules will be maintained enroute as closely as safe operating practices permit. At least fifteen (15) minute time gap will be maintained between convoys.

d. Serials should not number more than 35 task vehicles. There should be a ten (10) minute time gap between serials.

e. Unit integrity will be maintained whenever possible.

f. Maximum speed of convoy pace-setting vehicles will not exceed 15 MPH in built up areas and 25 MPH on the open road. Catch up speed

ANNEX A (VEHICLE OPERATIONS) to Standing Operating Procedures

for vehicles will be established on the basis of traffic, road, weather conditions and local posted limits.

g. All convoy operations will be vigorously supervised by officers and non-commissioned officers, to include the performance of required before, at the halt and after operation PM services on vehicles.

h. At all times during a tactical march, the policy is to KEEP MOVING. This policy is paramount because the safe delivery of cargo and/or personnel is the mission of this unit.

i. Halts will be scheduled by battalion commitment directive and only as the tactical situation may permit and as maintenance and refueling requirements dictate.

j. Recovery of disabled vehicles will be accomplished as expeditiously as possible. Battalions will establish procedures to utilize organic recovery vehicles and those belonging to other support units if necessary. Those vehicles which cannot be repaired in a short period of time will be towed to the nearest strong point and the location reported to the responsible recovery unit.

k. Each convoy will include a minimum of the following type vehicles:

SECURITY VEHICLES

RATIO PER TASK VEHICLE IN MARCH UNIT

1. Radio Gun Jeep	1 per 10
2. Gun Truck	1 per 10
3. Quad .50	as available
4. Maintenance Vehicle	1 per convoy

(Maintenance Vehicles must have tires, jack, lug wrench, oil, water, fuel and tools)

NOTE: All gun jeeps and gun trucks will carry at least 1 M-79 grenade launcher in addition to their assigned automatic weapons.

i. The cab floors of all vehicles in convoy will be sandbagged to provide protection against mines and other shrapnel-producing devices. Personnel riding in vehicles must keep arms and legs inside to achieve maximum protection from sandbags. As an additional precaution, a heavy rubber mat is recommended for placement over the

8th Trans Gp (MT)
6 September 1968

ANNEX A (VEHICLE OPERATIONS) to Standing Operating Procedures

sandbags to reduce fragments such as stones, sand, shrapnel and pieces of bag.

m. Each driver will be equipped with the following gear:

Helmet, steel, w/liner & camouflage cover

(2) Vest, armored

(3) Belt, pistol with ammo pouches

(4) First aid pouch

(5) Canteen (Full)

Sleeping equipment

Protective mask

n. The following basic load of ammunition will be carried (these are minimum figures and will not be considered as restricting additions):

Pistol Cal .45	4 clips (7 rounds each)
Rifle, M-16	11 Magazines (18-19 rounds each)
Rifle, M-14	10 Magazines (20 rounds each)
Machine Gun, M-60	1,200 rounds
Grenade Launcher M-79	24 rounds
Quad .50 Machine Gun	8,000 rounds

. Only when it is the intention of convoy personnel to fire on hostile forces will a round be inserted in the chamber.

p. Daytime vehicular interval will be 100 meters. A vehicular interval of not less than 25 meters will be maintained when the column is at the halt if the space situation permits, but in all instances a sufficient interval shall be left in order to permit a vehicle to pull around the vehicle in front of it and to permit intermittent traffic to pass.

8. ACTION TO BE TAKEN IN THE EVENT OF AMBUSH, SNIPER FIRE OR MINES:

ANNEX A (VEHICLE OPERATIONS) to Standing Operating Procedures

a. Ambushes:

- (1) When a convoy encounters sniper fire, an ambush or mines it should KEEP MOVING if at all possible.
- (2) The security forces will be contacted by radio immediately.
- (3) All vehicles which are beyond the "kill zone" will continue moving toward their destination.
- (4) If unavoidably stopped in the "kill zone", personnel must dismount, take up covered and concealed positions, and lay down a heavy volume of return fire only on active enemy targets, staying in close proximity of their vehicles. In no case will convoy personnel close with or attempt to pursue the enemy as this will interfere with the tactical reaction plan. Convoy personnel will cease fire upon arrival of tactical security elements to allow tactical vehicles and personnel freedom of movement against enemy forces. Convoy control personnel will insure that traffic begins to move as soon as the tactical situation permits.
- (5) Those vehicles which have not yet entered the "kill zone" will halt at 100 meter intervals, dismount and defend as described in para 8(a)(4) above, firing only if the enemy targets are visible.
- (6) If the tactical situation permits move disabled vehicles off the road.

b. Mining Incidents:

- (1) If mines are encountered, the convoy commander must, in conjunction with the tactical commander, quickly determine a course of action. While a single mine should not delay an entire convoy, vehicles must not enter an area known to be heavily mined.
- (2) If the convoy is halted by mines, the convoy commander will immediately alert the security forces and disperse his personnel around the vehicles in preparation for an attack.

c. Sniper Fire:

- (1) If the convoy or a segment of the convoy receives sniper fire, fire should be returned and vehicles will continue moving.
- (2) The convoy commander will attempt to determine the location of the sniper fire and report it to the tactical forces securing that portion of the route.

ANNEX A (VEHICLE OPERATIONS) to Standing Operating Procedures

9. GENERAL PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES:

a. Good convoy discipline and continuous driver training will reduce the possibility and/or effectiveness of enemy action against convoys.

b. Drivers should track the vehicles ahead when these vehicles are in sight. This will reduce the possibility of detonating a pressure-activated mine which the vehicle ahead may have missed. Conversely, old tracks should be avoided because Viet Cong commonly places mines in old tracks.

c. Speed generates carelessness. The enemy relies on careless drivers in his employment of mines.

d. Key personnel, who are prime targets for command detonated mines, must avoid congregating in one vehicle or location within the convoy.

e. Drivers should avoid carelessly driving over wooden sticks or other debris on the road. Pieces of wood (board or bamboo) on a roadway may indicate the presence of pressure activated mines or other explosives devices.

f. Vehicle operators should be alert for changes in familiar scenes, evidence of apparent road repairs, new fill or paving, road patches, mud smears, grass, dirt, dung or other substance on roads. Such areas could be evidence of enemy handiwork.

g. To avoid accidents at halts the posting of road guards at the front and rear of each column is required.

h. Rest halts should be avoided except at terminals or at locations where maximum security is afforded.

i. Each convoy commander will make such coordination as necessary with escorts or at critical points in sufficient time to prevent any delay of the convoy. Where unforeseen delays or route changes occur, the convoy commander will expeditiously notify his Battalion headquarters which will pass this information to the Group Operations Section. Information will include the cause, location (grid coordinates), alternate routes available and other pertinent data.

10. ENROUTE TECHNIQUES: (Supplemental to Paragraph 7)

a. The convoy commander as the senior officer/NCO in column is responsible for safe and proper convoy operation. Escorting

8th Trans Gp (MT)
6 September 1968

ANNEX A (VEHICLE OPERATIONS) to Standing Operating Procedures

military police have NO operational control over the convoy nor should they be considered as "pace-setters".

b. Local traffic regulations and control devices will be respected when convoy is proceeding without traffic escort, road guards, or the assistance of military police.

c. A convoy will not pass another moving convoy without obtaining permission from the lead convoy commander. If permission is granted, passing will not occur until the entire convoy being passed has halted.

d. Convoys will operate with lights on during the daylight hours.

e. If canvas is required, all straps and ropes will be securely tied, front and rear flaps will be used and secured.

11. TRUCK TERMINAL AND TRAILER TRANSFER POINT OPERATIONS:

a. Truck terminals/trailer transfer points will be located along MSR's as the operational mission dictates.

b. Truck terminals/TTP's will maintain an accurate log on semi-trailers and refrigerator vans passing through these facilities. (8th Trans Gp Form 2)

c. Truck terminals/TTP's will be staffed to perform emergency maintenance and running repairs on vehicles and semitrailers. Repairs of semitrailers beyond that capability will be accomplished by the Centralized Trailer Maintenance Point. Units will be responsible for the maintenance of their organic prime movers.

d. Current semitrailer/van status information will be maintained on all semitrailer/vans in their respective areas of operations.

e. Every effort will be made to require consignees to remove dunnage and other debris at time of offloading; however, if this is not done, each truck terminal/TTP will police the beds of the vehicles.

f. Truck terminals/TTP's operated by units of this command will provide the following facilities, as a minimum:

Covered rest area.

(2) Latrines and washing facilities.

Potable water and cold soft drinks.

Transient billets.

8th Trans Gp (MT)
6 September 1968

ANNEX A (VEHICLE OPERATIONS) to Standing Operating Procedures

(5) Mess facilities.

g. Semitrailers and refrigerator vans will be receipted whenever they are exchanged, using either Semitrailer Receipt and Inspection Form (8th Trans Gp Form 25R) or Refrigerator Van and Inspection Form (8th Trans Gp Form 54R) as applicable. These forms will provide documentation for the receipt of both loaded and empty trailers/vans moving into and from a TTP. Those receipts are also used to fix responsibility for the condition of trailers/vans listed. Trailer/van receipts will be retained in the files of units operating TTP's to support daily yard checks and reports.

h. A daily trailer dispatch report will be submitted to battalion operations at 2100 hours. This form consolidates trailers dispatched since the previous report.

i. An accurate trailer status report will be submitted daily to Group Operations by the TTP's at the time the area check is completed, but in any event NLT 2400 hours.

j. Units will provide semitrailers which are in satisfactory operating condition and which have clean cargo beds.

k. Operational necessities require that the unloading process include the following:

Cleaning the cargo bed.

Replacing the side boards properly in the sockets

(3) Removal of tie-down material (except welded chains) and bracing blocks.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 8TH TRANSPORTATION GROUP (MOTOR TRANSPORT)
APO 96238

AVCA-QN-TG-3

3 September 1967

SUBJECT: Synopsis of Ambush

Commanding General
US Army Support Command, Qui Nhon
APO 96238

On 2 September 1967, an 8th Transportation Group convoy under the control of the 54th Transportation Battalion, departed Pleiku on Route 19 for a return trip to Qui Nhon, at approximately 1610 hours. The convoy consisted of 37 task vehicles and 2 jeeps armed with M-60 machine guns. Because of mechanical troubles, a 5,000 gallon tanker which joined the convoy caused a split in the convoy of some 500 meters. At approximately 1855 hours, the lead $\frac{1}{4}$ ton vehicle was struck with a 57 M1 recoilless rifle round (vic BR 348454) killing one man and wounding two others. Simultaneously, a secondary ambush was sprung at BR 339460 on the second element of the convoy. The enemy force, estimated at a reinforced company, used command detonated mines, recoilless rifles, automatic weapons, and small arms against the convoy. The main ambush was conducted over a 700 meter kill zone with the secondary attack providing a blocking action. The enemy force was situated on the south side of the road, although some gun placements were located in the north. Because of the intensity of the fire and perfect execution of the ambush, little fire was returned by friendly personnel caught in the killing zone. Tactical Security elements arrived within 10-15 minutes. Spooky arrived at 2020 hours. The convoy suffered, 7 KIA, 17 MIA and 30 vehicles damaged/destroyed. Enemy casualties and unit designation are unknown.

/s/ John H. Bruke
/t/ JOHN E. BURKE
LTC, TC
Commanding

"A TRUE COPY"

John E. Bruke
DIANE D. CODE
Major, TC

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 8TH TRANSPORTATION GROUP (MOTOR TRANSPORT)
APO 96238

AVCA-QN-TG

25 November 1967

SUBJECT: Synopsis of Ambush

Commanding General
US Army Support Command, Qui Nhon
APO 96238

At 1005 hours, 24 November 1967, a convoy going to Pleiku from the 54th Transportation Battalion was ambushed by an NVA force at grid coordinates AR 965465. This convoy consisted of 43 - 5 ton cargo trucks, 15 2½ ton cargo trucks, 6 - gun trucks, 3 gun jeeps and 1 maintenance truck. The following account of what happened is submitted based on telephonic reports from Pleiku. The ambush began when the lead gun truck in the convoy was stopped by small arms fire and simultaneously the lead cargo vehicle was hit by a command detonated mine. This truck was stopped along the right side of the road. The convoy tried to run through the ambush, per 8th Group SOF, but only one truck was successful in breaking out of the 300 meter kill zone. The remaining trucks that tried to break out were stopped by mines or small arms fire, effectively blocking the road. One of the trucks, carrying ammo, was hit and exploded, destroying a gun truck of the second serial that was behind it. The gun truck of the third serial was hit by small arms fire and stopped. The gun truck of the fourth serial was hit by a grenade, but this grenade did not penetrate the armor plating. The 5th and 6th gun trucks were not hit, but immediately returned fire as did all drivers once they were stopped. A machine gunner in the 5th gun truck killed an NVA machine gunner before he could fire on the convoy from a distance of only 10 feet from the road.

The results of this ambush are as follows:

- a. Friendly: 2 KIA and 17 WIA with one of these in critical condition.
- b. Enemy: 41 KIA and 4 WIA (POW's), of this figure the convoy accounted for 19 KIA and 3 WIA prior to the arrival of the security forces.
- c. Vehicle Damage: 14 trucks (4 of these were gun trucks) 6 to 9 of these were destroyed.

The security forces at CP 91W reacted within a few minutes to a call of "contact" made by the convoy commander, Lt Turvis, and to the sound of the ambush which they could hear. When they arrived at ambush site, they conducted a major sweep and pursuit to account for final enemy casualties.

AVCA-QN-TG

25 November 1967

SUBJECT: Synopsis of Ambush

A more detailed account, complete with statements of witnesses will be presented as soon as investigating officers from this headquarters return from Pleiku.

TEL: FT 786/779

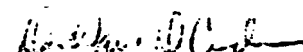
/s/ Joe O. Bellino

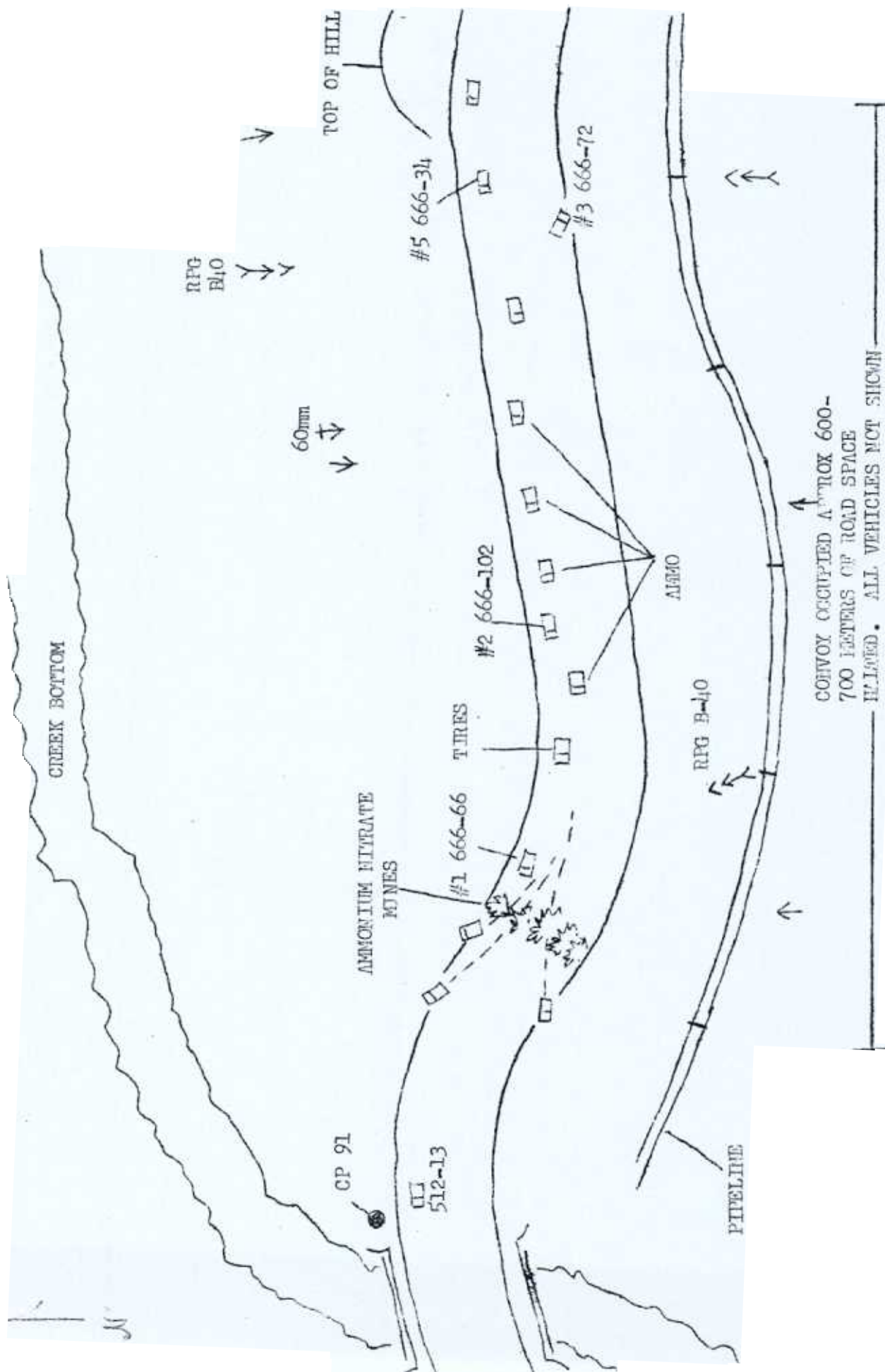
/t/ JOE O. BELLENO

Colonel, TC

Commanding

"A TRUE COPY"


DYWANE D. CUDE
Major, TC



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 8TH TRANSPORTATION GROUP (MOTOR TRANSPORT)
APO 96238

AVLA-QN-TG

5 December 1967

SUBJECT: Synopsis of Ambush

Commanding General
US Army Support Command, Qui Nhon
APO 96238

At 0815 hours, 4 December 1967, a convoy going to Pleiku from the 54th Transportation Battalion, was ambushed by a Viet Cong unit estimated at company size (three 20-30 man platoons) at grid coordinates ER 330460. This convoy consisted of 58-5 ton cargo trucks, 11-2½ ton cargo trucks, 6 gun trucks (armor plated), 4 gun jeeps and 1 maintenance truck. The ambush began when a charge was detonated at the side of the road. The lead gun truck driver noticed a board with three mines pulled across the road in front of him. He stopped his vehicle and at that moment the vehicle was hit by small arms fire and a recoilless rocket, killing the driver. The lead jeep (second vehicle in convoy) also received small arms fire and was stopped. Both vehicles immediately began returning fire, utilizing the two (2) M-60 machine guns and M-79 grenade launcher in the truck and the M-60 machine gun in the jeep. Four other vehicles received flat tires and body damage. Personnel began returning fire under the leadership of 1LT Todd, the march unit commander (second vehicle in the convoy). Gun trucks of the march unit moved forward into the approximately 3000 meter long kill zone, and subsequently one of these was hit by rocket fire wounding three gunners. The leadership and firepower of the convoy was immediately and responsive enough to account for all enemy KIAs and WIA prior to arrival of the reaction force. At the time of the ambush, 0815 hours, a call of "ambush! ambush! ambush!" went out over the radio from the convoy. The reported time of arrival of the gunships was 0827, twelve minutes after start of the ambush; a reaction force formed at an artillery base camp and brought in by the Group Commander, arrived at approximately 0830. The quick reaction time of the convoy personnel and the intense base of fire put up by the machine gunners in the gun trucks broke the enemy ambush prior to the arrival of any of the reaction forces. From the point of view of the convoy, the reaction time of the combat supporting forces was too slow. The reaction time of 12 minutes for gunship support is marginal; the reaction time of 15 minutes for the first ground troops (considering that they were motivated by convoy control personnel) is excessive, and 25 minutes after the call "ambush! ambush! ambush!" was given is too long to wait for air lifted support.

areas follows:

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 8TH TRANSPORTATION GROUP (MOTOR TRANSPORT)
APO 96238

AVCA-QN-TG

22 February 1968

SUBJECT: Synopsis of Ambush

TO: Commanding General
US Army Support Command, Qui Nhon
APO 96238

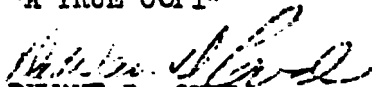
On 21 February 1968, an 8th Transportation Group convoy under the control of the 27th Transportation Battalion, departed Qui Nhon at approximately 0715 hours west on highway 19 for Pleiku. The convoy consisted of 54 task vehicles, 4 gun trucks, 4 gun jeeps and a quad fifty. At approximately 0950 hours, between CP 89 and CP 96 (vic BR 348 455), the convoy came under fire from B-40 rockets, automatic weapons and small arms fire. Convoy security personnel immediately returned fire in the direction of suspected enemy positions south of the highway.

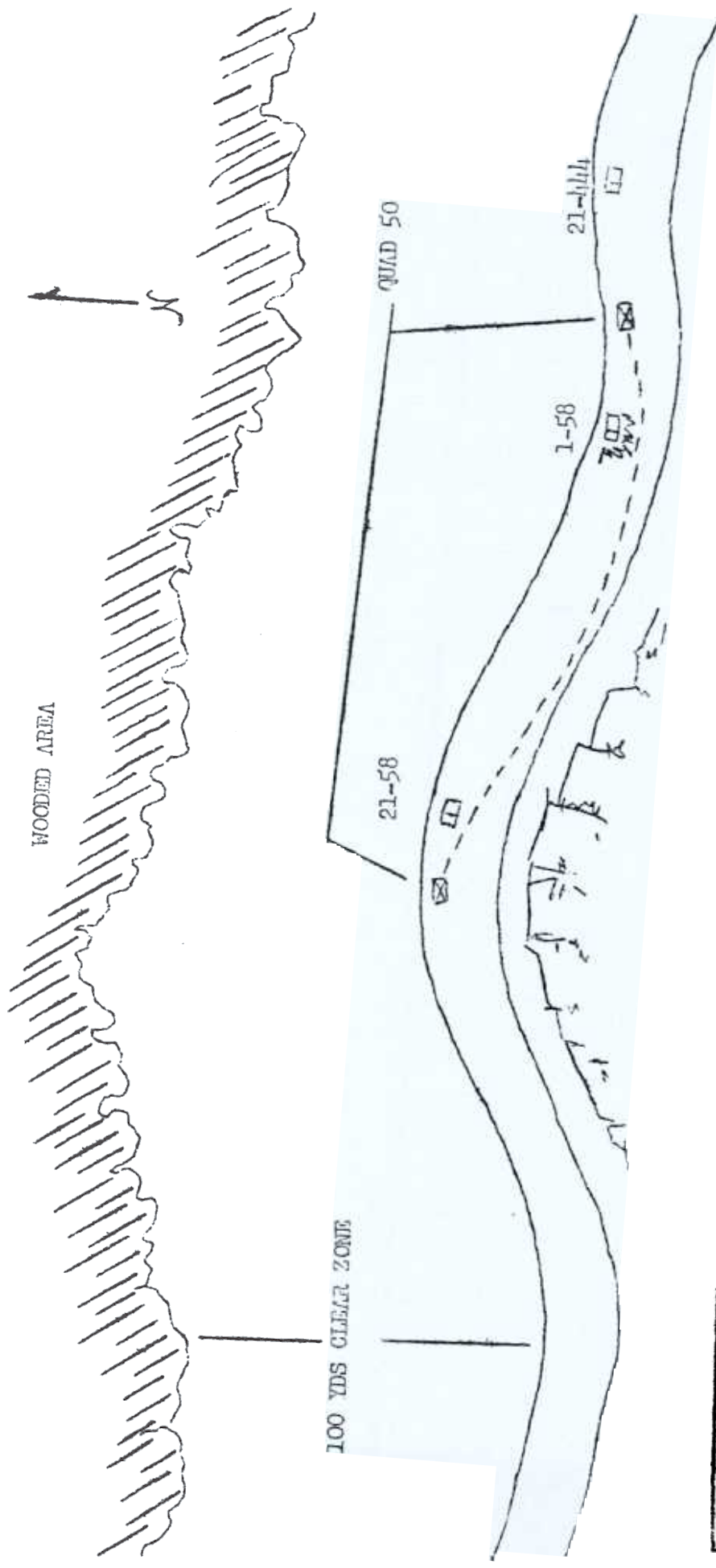
The 27th Transportation Battalion quad fifty moved into the kill zone, which was estimated at approximately 300 meters, and was credited with 1 NVA KIA. APC's from the 173d Airborne Division arrived in approximately 5-10 minutes and engaged the enemy force. Artillery also was used by the tactical force. Three convoy personnel were slightly wounded. Three vehicles, including the quad fifty gun truck, were damaged, one task vehicle seriously. The enemy force was estimated at 10-12 personnel. Unit designation is unknown. One NVA was KIA and another possibly WIA. No mines were used against the convoy. Foxholes were found in the area of the ambush.

TEL: PT 786/779

/s/ Joe O. Bellino
/t/ JOE O. BELLINO
Colonel, TC
Commanding

"A TRUE COPY"


DYWANE D. CUDE
Major, TC



<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	QUAD 50
<input type="checkbox"/>	CARGO TRUCK
<input type="checkbox"/>	HVA KIA
<input type="checkbox"/>	HVA MIA

_____ M KILL ZONE



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 8TH TRANSPORTATION GROUP (MOTOR TRANSPORT)
APO 96238

AVCA-QN-TG

14 May 1968

SUBJECT: Synopsis of Ambush

Commanding General
US Army Support Command, Qui Nhon
APO 96238

1. At 1000 hours, 12 May 1968, two 8th Transportation Group convoys were involved in ambushes on Highway 1.
2. A south bound convoy consisting of 14 task vehicles plus security, under the supervision of the 27th Transportation Battalion, received enemy fire 200 meters south of Bridge 329 (BR 985 856). A north bound convoy consisting of 31 task vehicles plus security, under the supervision of the 54th Transportation Battalion, was approaching the same location when the enemy opened fire. The enemy force, estimated to be a reinforced squad, opened up with automatic weapons and M-79 fire. The primary force was in a tree-line 150 to 200 meters from the west side of the road. The kill zone was estimated to be about 200 meters long. In this action the 54th Transportation Battalion sustained one KIA and the 240th Quartermaster Battalion sustained one WIA (POL tanker driver). Several vehicles were damaged by the enemy fire. Both convoys increased speed and moved through the kill zone.
3. The 54th Transportation Battalion 2½ ton cargo truck, driven by the soldier who was KIA, ran off the road onto a small bank. A gun jeep and two gun trucks rendered immediate assistance while directing the convoy through the kill zone. The casualties were evacuated and the convoy continued north without further incident.
4. The 27th Transportation Battalion convoy cleared the kill zone with only minor damage to vehicles (bullet holes) and continued south. As the convoy reached the vicinity of Bridge 376 (BR 930 779), at approximately 1010 hours, enemy fire was again encountered, this time from the east side of the road, from a distance of 200 meters. The enemy fire consisted of M-79 rounds and automatic weapons fire. One driver was WIA. Four 27th Transportation Battalion vehicles were lightly damaged as a result of both encounters. The size of the enemy force at the second ambush site was estimated as platoon size.

AVCA-QN-TG

14 May 1968

SUBJECT: Synopsis of Ambush


Upon receiving fire, the lead armored truck pulled over and engaged the enemy while allowing the convoy to pass through the kill zone.

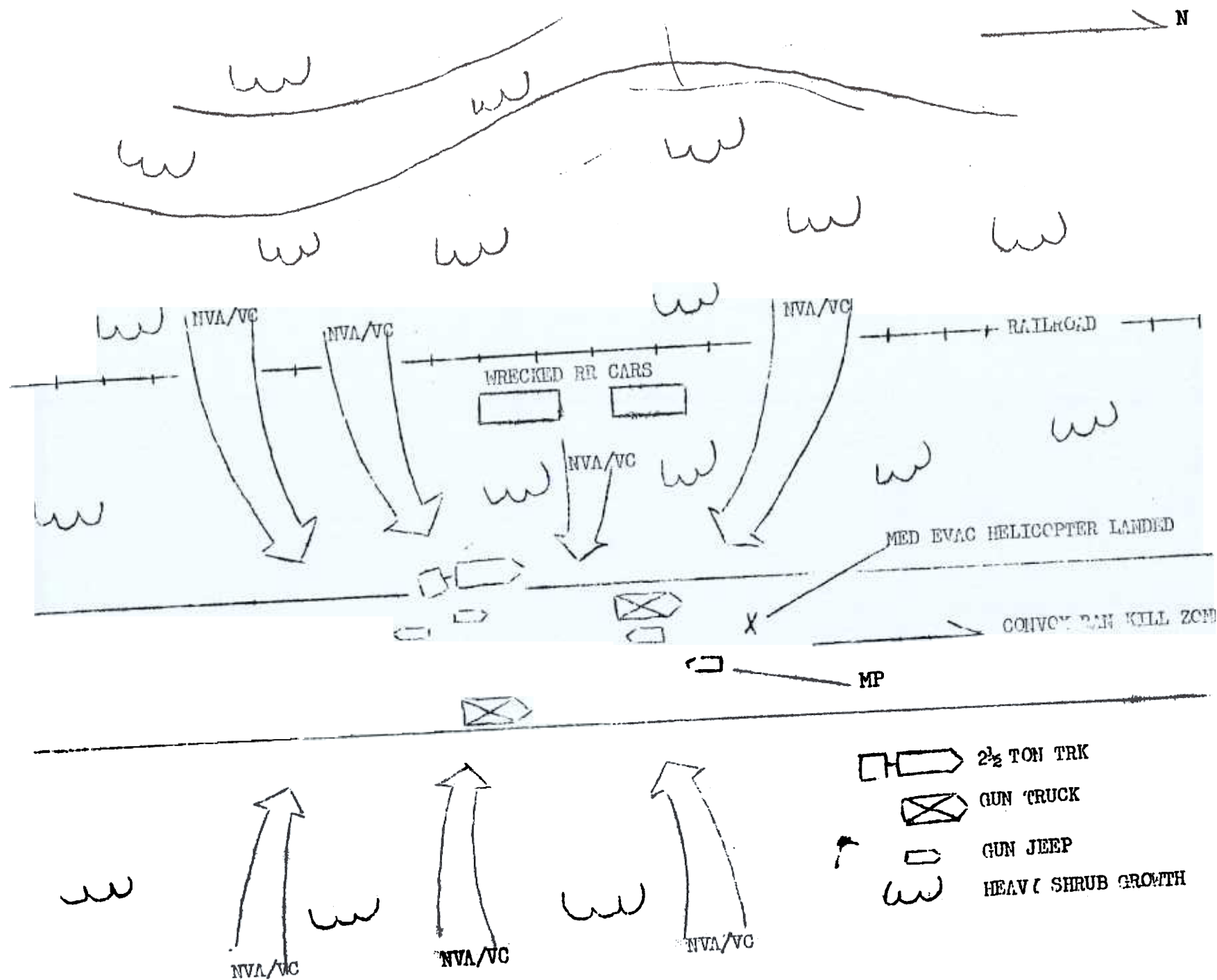
5. As a result of both ambushes the 8th Transportation Group suffered 1 KIA and 1 MIA while total casualties were 1 KIA and 2 MIA. Enemy casualties are unknown. The action also resulted in damage to nine (9) 8th Transportation Group vehicles.






TEL: PT 786/779

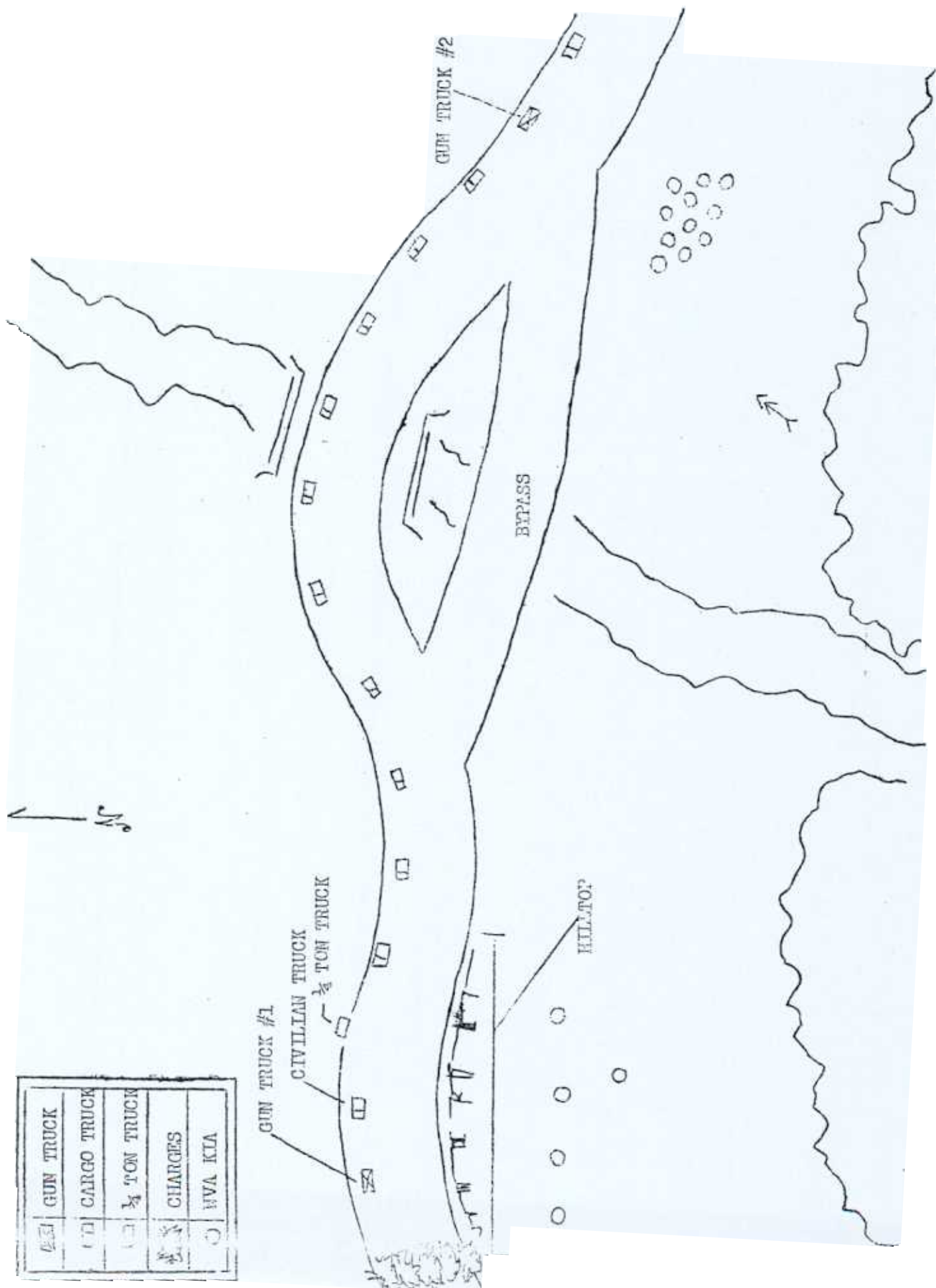
/s/ John H. Burke
/t/ JOHN H. BURKE
LTC, TC
Commanding

"A TRUE COPY"


DYLANE D. CODE
Maj, TC



	GUN TRUCK
	CARGO TRUCK
	1/2 TON TRUCK
	CHARGES
	HVA KIA



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 8TH TRANSPORTATION GROUP (MOTOR TRANSPORT)
APO 96238

AVCA-QN-TG-3

16 August 1968

SUBJECT: Synopsis of Ambush

Commanding General
US Army Support Command, Qui Nhon
APO 96238

On 14 August 1968, an 8th Transportation Group convoy, under the control of the 54th Transportation Battalion, departed Qui Nhon on Route 19 for a line haul trip to Pleiku, at approximately 1215 hours. The convoy consisted of 68 task vehicles, 7 gun trucks, 5 gun jeeps armed with M-60 machine guns, and 1 Quad fifty gun truck. At 1545 hours, as the 1st serial of the convoy was proceeding west past an area approximately two miles west of Bridge 34, grid coordinates AR982500, an enemy force dressed in ARVN marine uniforms attacked the convoy with small arms and B-40 rocket fire. The enemy force was estimated to be more than a platoon and less than a company. Four gun trucks, 1 Quad fifty gun truck and 1 gun jeep immediately returned fire within the estimated 300 yard kill zone. A reaction force of 6 APCs and 3 helicopter gunships arrived within 5 minutes after contact. All 8th Group task vehicles made it out of the kill zone. However, five of these vehicles suffered damage; and one of the five was heavily damaged. The 8th Group suffered 4 WIA and there was 1 WIA from the 1/69th Armored Bn. The convoy commander reported 12 enemy troops were hit by return fire. After the security forces swept the area of contact, 4 enemy WIA were discovered. The 5 US wounded were medevacuated to the 71st Med Evac Hosp. Of these, two were treated and released.

REL: PT 786/779

/s/ Joe O. Bellino
/t/ JOE O. BELLINO
Colonel, TC
Commanding

"A TRUE COPY"

DYLANE D. CUDE
Major, TC

- CARGO TRUCK
- ⊗ GUN TRUCK
- ▢ APC
- ≡ ELEPHANT GRASS
- ⊕ TREES
- ⊗ MACHINE GUN

← RPG B-40

≡≡≡ HOUNDS OF MANTH

← HEAVY MORTAR FIRE

PIPE LINE
BR 34

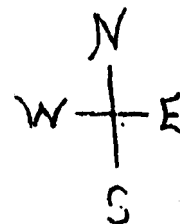
NVA

GLOI NIEH

X 766

800-1000 METERS MAIN KILL ZONE

1/69th 2½ Ton



512-24 GT

TREE LINE

250-300 meter
DIVERTIVE FORCE KILL ZONE

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 8TH TRANSPORTATION GROUP (MOTOR TRANSPORT)
APO 96238

AVCA-QN-TG-3

23 August 1968

SUBJECT: Synopsis of Ambush

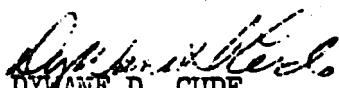
Commanding General
US Army Support Command, Qui Nhon
APO 96238

At 0815 hours on 23 August 1968, the 88th Transportation Company of the 124th Transportation Battalion departed An Khe enroute to Pleiku with 30 loaded tractor-trailer combinations, 3 gun trucks and 2 gun jeeps. At 0900, a force estimated to be two rifle companies attacked the convoy 300 meters west of Check Point 27 just as it was passing by pump station #3 at the base of Mang Giang Pass. The enemy fired rockets, mortars and automatic weapons into a kill zone that extended the length of the entire convoy. The convoy suffered 1 KHA and 5 WHA. The 1 KHA plus 2 WHA were gun jeep personnel. The other 3 WHA were drivers of task vehicles. Three of the five WHA were medevaced to An Khe while the other two, who were slightly wounded, continued on with the convoy. One tractor-trailer combination and its cargo (Class IV) were destroyed by a mortar round while six other tractor trailer combinations were abandoned in the kill zone due to damage incurred. Four others were damaged but were able to proceed through the kill zone to the top of Mang Giang Pass where emergency repairs were made and they proceeded on to Pleiku. The six vehicles abandoned in the kill zone are being policed up by the Commanding Officer of the 88th Transportation Company in An Khe. There were 3 APCs between Bridge 27 and 29 which returned fire. It took 10-15 minutes for the reaction force to arrive. Two dusters were the first reaction force on the scene. No gunships were present since they were both refueling in An Khe. A platoon of APCs which was behind the 8th Transportation Group convoy came up, swept the area and found 5 enemy KIA.

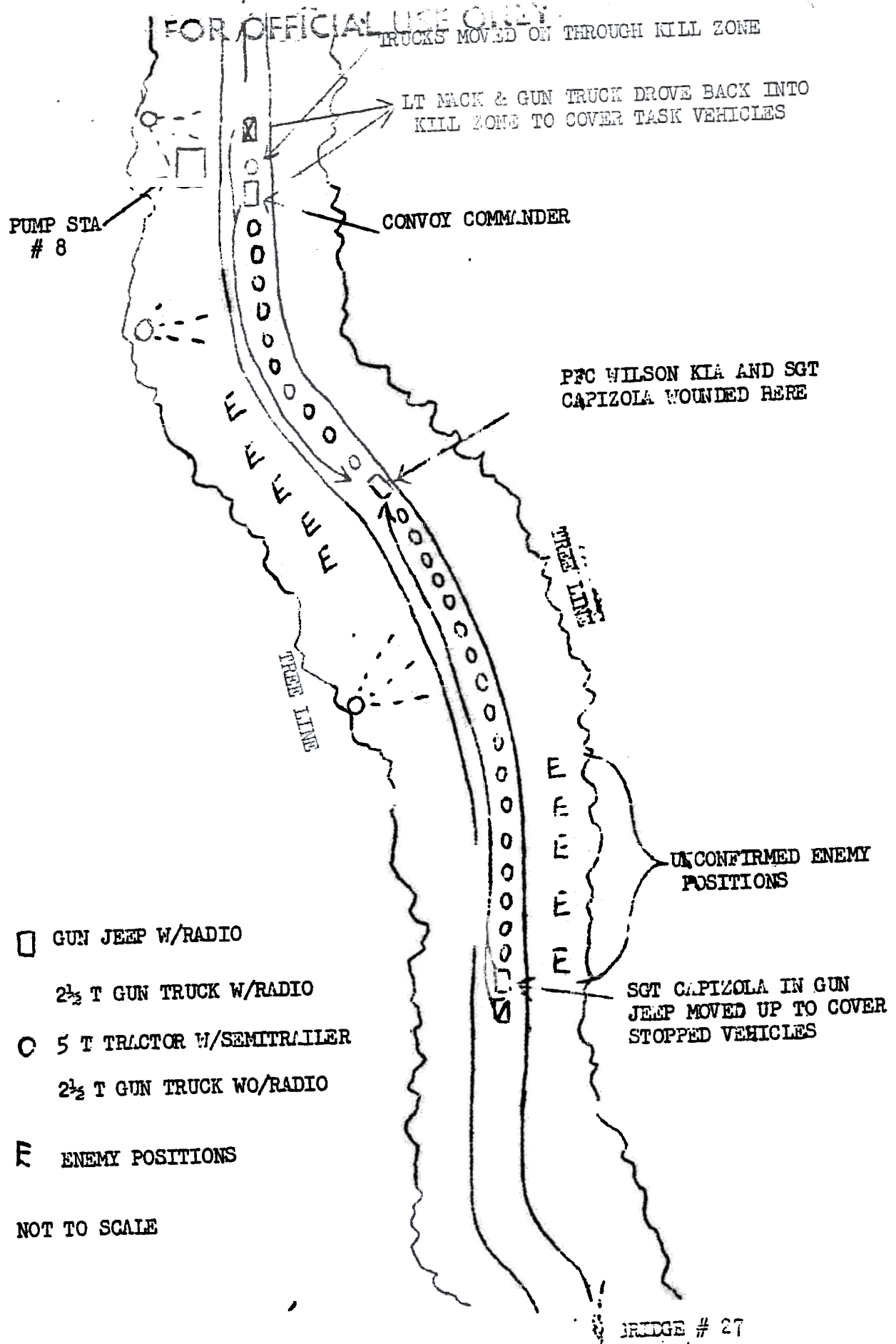
TEL: PT 786/779

/s/ Joe C. Bellino
/t/ JOE C. BELLINO
Colonel, TC
Commanding

"A TRUE COPY"


DYANE D. CUDE
Major, TC

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PUMP STA
8

CONVOY COMMANDER

TRUCKS MOVED ON THROUGH KILL ZONE

LT MACK & GUN TRUCK DROVE BACK INTO
KILL ZONE TO COVER TASK VEHICLES

PFC WILSON KIA AND SGT
CAPIZOLA WOUNDED HERE

UNCONFIRMED ENEMY
POSITIONS

SGT CAPIZOLA IN GUN
JEEP MOVED UP TO COVER
STOPPED VEHICLES

BRIDGE # 27

□ GUN JEEP W/RADIO

2½ T GUN TRUCK W/RADIO

○ 5 T TRACTOR W/SEMITRAILER

2½ T GUN TRUCK WO/RADIO

E ENEMY POSITIONS

NOT TO SCALE

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 8TH TRANSPORTATION GROUP (MOTOR TRANSPORT)
APO 96238

AVCA-QN-TG-3

31 August 1968

SUBJECT: Synopsis of Ambush

Commanding General
US Army Support Command, Qui Nhon
APO 96238

At 0900 hours on 31 August 1968, an 8th Transportation Group convoy under the control of the 124th Transportation Battalion's 88th Transportation Company departed An Khe to Pleiku with 33 tractor-trailer combinations, 3 gun trucks and 2 gun jeeps. At 0945, a force estimated to be 100 NVA attacked the convoy between grid coordinates BR 264 468 and BR 256 482. The enemy used mortars, rockets, automatic weapons, small arms and hand grenades in a 1700 meter kill zone. The convoy suffered 1 KHA and 6 WHA. Four of the six WHA were medevaced to An Khe while the other two, who were slightly wounded, continued on with the convoy. One gun truck and seven task vehicles became inoperable and were abandoned in the kill zone. Another vehicle was badly damaged but able to proceed through the kill zone to the top of Mang Giang Pass to a secure area. The eight vehicles abandoned in the kill zone are being picked up by the Commanding Officer of the 88th Transportation Company in An Khe. There were 2 APCs in the vicinity of the ambush site and artillery fire was on target in approximately one minute. It took approximately 10-15 minutes for a reaction force of 5 APCs and 6 gunships to arrive. The 2 gunships normally over the column were on the ground in An Khe being refueled. The forces were in contact for approximately 30 minutes. The enemy suffered 6 KIA.

TEL: PT 786/779

Joe O. Bellino
JOE O. BELLINO
Colonel, TC
Commanding

Safer Convoy Routes

Ingenuity Licks Road Mines

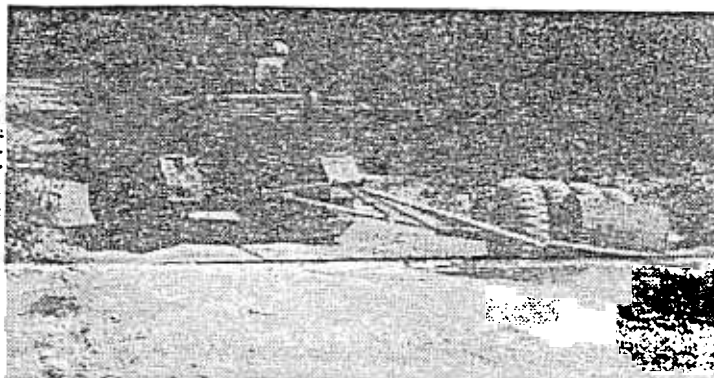
QUI NHON, Vietnam (Special) — A few feet of metal tubing, four over-inflated tractor tires, two sand-filled 55-gallon drums and some imagination has resulted in a safer convoy route for the truckers of Qui Nhon Support Command's 8th Transportation Group.

The material was used to build a homemade minesweeper, designed to probe the shoulders of the roadway where enemy mines are often found. The sweeper is pulled behind an armored personnel carrier on a 20-foot long towing bar.

The new sweeper rates high because the huge twelve-ton trailers and five-ton tractors used extensively throughout the 8th Group's area of responsibility usually are forced to use the road shoulders, especially at bends.

According to Maj. Homer Belche, 8th Group security officer, the roads are swept each morning. It was Belche who drew up the rough design for the sweeper and gave it to the 8th's maintenance shop at the 444th Transportation Co. to build.

Col. Joe O. Bellino, commander of the 8th Group, spoke of the need for more innovations of this type. "This is a new kind of war for truckers," he said, "so we have a whole new set of obstacles for which there is no textbook solution. But the dedication of men like Maj. Belche and others throughout the command, have enabled us to take a positive approach to our problems and work them out."



Troops of the 8th Transportation Group sweep the edges of a road with their "homemade" equipment. (USA)